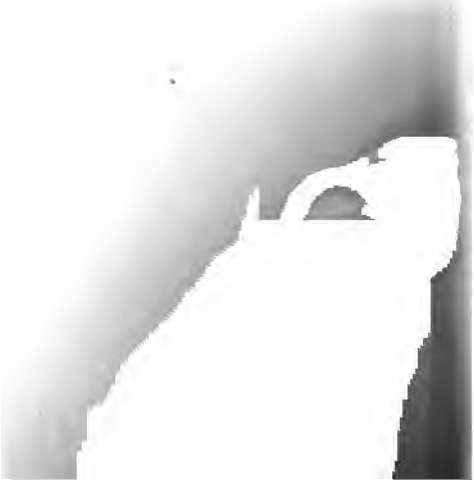

THE YOUNG JOURNALIST

1 Journalism, Cl. BV

3 Journalism. - Handbooks, manuals, etc

THE YOUNG JOURNALIST

HIS WORK AND HOW TO LEARN IT

BY

J. HENRY HARRIS

(Parliamentary Gallery Reporter)

LONDON:

GUILBERT PITMAN

CECIL COURT, CHARING CROSS ROAD, W.C.

1902

TO THE READER.

THE task which I have set myself is to show, How a young man with a newspaper brain may after proper training become a successful working journalist.

Professional journalists are frequently asked by parents and guardians for advice respecting the prospects which journalism offers to those anxious to adopt it as a profession. They ask: What qualifications a fairly educated youth should possess before entering on this business? What special training (if any) he should have? And then, What the prospects are before a young man who, after years of training, shows aptitude for becoming a successful journalist?

These three important practical questions I have endeavoured to answer in this book in such a manner as to enable young men, and those interested in them, to judge for themselves:

Whether Nature has endowed them with Newspaper brains of the right brand.

Whether they are prepared to undergo the necessary drilling in order to educate and develop them. And, lastly,

Whether they will be satisfied with the modest rewards which journalism has to offer.

These three questions dismissed, the much discussed question, "Can journalism be taught?" is answered affirmatively in these pages.

I hope and believe that this book will be useful in two

The Young Journali

J. HENRY HARRIS.

THE YOUNG JOURNALIST

in the composing room, and act as general utility man in the publishing department. They undertake to teach him shorthand, if he does not know it, and give him ample time for practising the art if he does. At the end of the first year they introduce the pupil to the reporters' room, and at the end of the second year are ready to cancel the agreement if the pupil repents of his choice of a profession or does not give satisfaction to his chiefs. They pay a moderate salary to the pupil in his third year, and increase it liberally during his fourth and last. The proprietors constantly receive applications for pupils out of their time, and many young men have dropped into good appointments in India and the Colonies simply because they have been trained on the *Gazette.*

I now propose to show the youth who would become a working journalist some of the "mysteries" of his craft, and the advantages of spending twelve months

IN THE COMPOSING ROOM.

This is sometimes called the Case room, because the metal types are distributed in cases; but when the letters or "stamps"* are picked up to form words in lines, they are "set" in a metal composing stick which the compositor holds in his left hand. This is the universal practice in all offices wherein composing machines have not been introduced.

In the case room will be learnt the names and uses of the various types in a newspaper. For example:

* "Picking up stamps" means composing.

Long Primer or Bourgeois is used for setting up leading articles, summaries, and important late matter.

Brevier or Minion, for reports and ordinary reading matter. Minion is now the rule.

Nonpareil for prize lists, awards, extracts from documents, etc., introduced into a report, for instance. Nothing smaller than Nonpareil is used for reading matter. Advertisements are usually set in Nonpareil or Pearl, and nothing smaller is found in a weekly newspaper, though Diamond and Ruby are not unknown in some technical publications.

Pica, or two-line Pica capitals are often used as initial letters for paragraph advertisements. Displayed advertisements are set in a variety of types which properly belong to the "jobbing" department, and need not be specified here. In well-established weekly papers where space is valuable, "jobbing" types are rarely seen, but a knowledge of them is useful, and in time the pupil will learn to discriminate between the good or bad taste shown by the printer in the "display" advertisements which so often mar the appearance of a newspaper.

Every "case" is divided into Upper and Lower. The Upper contains the capitals and small capitals (called "caps." and "small caps." for short) and numerals. In MSS., three dashes under a word signify "caps.," and two dashes "small caps." The Lower Case contains the ordinary Roman letters of the alphabet, spaces, punctuation points, etc. Every letter, space and point has its separate box. The cases are soon learnt and seldom afterwards forgotten.

Each font of Roman type has a corresponding font of Italic type (distinguished in MSS. by a single dash under the word), usually kept in the frame on which the cases are supported. The compositor understands that the ordinary Roman letter is meant unless the MS. shows the contrary. A compositor is exonerated from all blame if he follows the reading and direction marks of MSS. The saying is: "A comp. follows his copy even if it flies out of window."

The space boxes are very important, and are used to divide words and adjust lines. The white between the words in printed matter is the space, and the practised eye at once detects a slovenly comp. by his spacing. There are five spaces, called em and en quads, thick, thin and hair spaces. The em quad is used after a full stop. With these five spaces of varying thickness a good compositor will always make a workmanlike adjustment of his lines, however pressed for time he may be. The proper use of the humble space boxes, the pupil will soon learn, is one of the fine arts of the trade.

Note that every metal letter is plain on three sides, and "nicked" on the fourth. Run your eye along a line set in a composing stick and you will find that the words run from left to right, like an Oriental language, and that the "nicks" are all outwards. If the "nicks" vary you will know that the letters belong to different fonts. If the "nick" does not show, then the letter is wrong side up. The compositor reads the metal in his stick upside down, and a very little practice makes perfect.

By learning to set type in metal, a "typographical

eye" of much assistance in proof-reading is acquired. Amateurs, however scholarly they may be, are, as a rule, but indifferent (often very bad) proof-readers. The letters b, d, n, u, p and q, when turned, form other letters and are out of "register"; the letters o and s when turned are seldom detected except by practical men; but the other letters of the alphabet betray themselves at once if there is anything wrong in their setting.

When the pupil is able to set a stick of matter properly adjusted, he will have made considerable progress in the printer's art. A stick contains twenty lines of minion, and is the unit of length measure: so many "sticks" to a column. A fair average newspaper column is twelve sticks, or two hundred and forty lines of minion. When the column is longer the width is usually narrower than the average. The unit of width measure is the "em" quad. It takes about 2,200 words, or 11,000 letters in minion type to fill an average newspaper column set solid.

The type is emptied from the stick on to galleys. As there are few things more ticklish to handle than dry type, lifting twenty lines of matter without accident requires practice until the knack is acquired. A galley, when full, is secured by a sidestick and wedges called quoins, and taken to the long, narrow press near the wall known as the galley press. Here the proofs are pulled for the reader—a proof is usually called a "pull." The editor calls for "a 'pull' of my article as soon as ready." After the proof is pulled, the galley is deposited in a rack to wait correction.

The slab in the middle of most composing rooms is

the "stone"—if made of metal it is still the stone. Here the type is all laid out in parallel columns and secured in square iron frames called "chases" before being sent down to the machine room. At the stone the pupil learns the names and uses of much of the "furniture" indispensable to printers.

All questions and disputes in the case room are settled around the stone. Those assembled form a "chapel" over which the "father" of the shop presides. The ancient game of "jeff" is played around the stone. The game is peculiar to the trade and is a form of dice played with three em quads, the hands serving as dice box. The "nicks" count, and he who gets the greatest number of "nicks" in three throws, wins. In some offices the game is not permitted, but usually the comps. "jeff" for beer or other refreshments when they have an idle quarter of an hour.

In the case room a young man learns many very useful things beside the setting of type. I would first mention the *reading of strange handwriting at sight* as of great value to him in his journalistic career. Printers are proverbial for being able to decipher MSS. which ordinary people can make neither head nor tail of. I have heard from my father that the poet Landor sometimes employed a compositor in the *Bath Herald* office to read to him some of his own bad MS. The poet was a frequent contributor to the *Herald*, and this compositor was an expert in bad caligraphy. Dr. Wordsworth, the late Bishop of Lincoln, has often favoured me with MS. which it was

a penance to me to read, but there was a compositor in the *Guardian* office who delighted in it. When neither editor nor reporter can read an MS. well, he sends it to the compositors' room with the remark, "We'll see how it looks in proof." If the comp. can make nothing of it, it must be bad indeed. To acquire early in one's career a facility for reading bad copy at sight is a decided advantage.

Being practical men, the opinion of compositors on handwriting is worth having, and the young man is not long in the case room before he gets it. Compositors dislike flourishes and ligatures of all kinds connecting separate words; and they dislike writing without any decided character about it. Firm downstrokes and ample space between each word is "good copy."* The school-board caligraphy of to-day promises well for the future comfort of compositors. Experienced comps. prefer writing to reprint, there being less monotony in setting it up, and less liability to make mistakes on account of the closer attention required. The same thing happens with reporters who, as a rule, prefer writing from their notes to copying from printed documents.†

Closely connected with handwriting is the paper written on. Compositors dislike sheets so large as to cover over too many boxes in the upper case, and so require frequent shifting. This is a little thing in

---

* *Post.* Remarks on writing on flimsy.

† The mechanical accuracy of law stationers is, however, marvellous, and is a good illustration of the effects of habit on work performed.

itself, but it makes a serious difference to men working on piece work.

When the comp. does not misread his copy the "literal" is the commonest form of error for correction in proof; and "literals" occur through letters being in the wrong boxes. Literals are easily corrected; it is over-running which takes time and vexes the compositor's soul. Usually over-running is the result of inattention or negligence. When a short word is left out it can generally be squeezed in by substituting thin for thick spaces. When, however, several words are left out in a sentence it may be necessary to over-run a whole stick, or down to the end of the paragraph. The newspaper proof-reader (usually a compositor by trade) comes to the assistance of the comp. in such cases, and alters the structure of the sentence when he can, so as to reduce the work of over-running to a minimum. The journalist who, in his early days has corrected his own proofs in metal, is ever after a considerate proof-reader and helps the comp. whenever he can.

Errors commonly termed "printers' errors" in newspapers may be classified as follows:

Those that escape the proof-reader's eye.

Those that the reader allows to pass.

Errors made by the compositor when correcting his own matter on the galley.

Errors through the transposition of matter when the master printer is making up his columns.

Errors occasioned when making up on the stone by putting dropped letters and spaces into wrong places.

Late matter is often inserted without being read in proof in order to save time, but it is properly corrected for the next edition.

These are legitimate errors and causes of error. Instances are, however, not wanting in history of another class of error—error by design with sinister motive—brought about by slight changes in words or by the wholesale introduction of new matter into metal on the stone. The most flagrant instance in modern days occurred in an early edition of *The Times* report of an important political speech by Sir William Harcourt. The interpolated words cannot be quoted. It is to the credit of newspaper compositors as a body that errors by design seldom occur in a news sheet.

The young journalist in his progress through the case room learns how to save time, trouble and expense when his time comes to correct proofs, or to "cut down" overset matter. Before he is removed to the reporters' room he will possess a considerable knowledge of technical and routine work.

He will know the abbreviations in common use amongst press-men and understood by all compositors, and have learnt the desirability of avoiding all careless and slovenly interlineations and "side flags" to his copy, and thus in after life he will establish a certain sympathy between himself and every man who handles his copy, for the comp. knows at a glance whether the writer is, or is not, a practical journalist.

He will have acquired to some extent the faculty of "casting up" copy at a glance—that is, the ability of

readily estimating how many columns a pile of MSS., in various handwritings, and on various sizes of copy paper, will come to in metal. This valuable faculty is in daily and hourly use in a newspaper office, and the journalist who does not possess it is constantly at a disadvantage in his own department, and has to place implicit reliance on the overseer in the case room, which he cannot always afford in the conduct of an economically worked journal.

He will know the proper use of rules and leads, and how to "lay out" his copy; for example, what paragraphs should have "side" and what "full" headings; when indented and when cross headings should be used; when Roman and when Italic caps. are wanted. These little things constitute the physiognomy of newspapers; and though there is a certain family likeness between news sheets, an experienced journalist can generally tell what paper he is reading without looking at its title. Not only the editors but the readers of old-established weekly journals are very particular about the "make-up."

If there is a "jobbing" department attached to a newspaper—and generally there is—the young man in the case room will learn many useful things inseparably connected with the business side of his profession. He will learn much in connection with paper—its prices, sizes and qualities, and how to cut it to advantage—inks and rollers, and atmospheric effects on both; and in the machine room, if there is an antiquated screw-press there, he will learn at a glance the three stages in the evolution of the printing

machine—the screw, the lever, and the cylinder. However superficial, the knowledge obtained will be practical, and will be of advantage to the journalist when his time comes to make a study of mechanical and other up-to-date processes for the improvement of his newspaper.

During the year passed in the composing room the pupil will have learnt shorthand. Should he have learnt it before his apprenticeship so much the better, for all he will then need do is to keep it up, in which case he will enter the reporters' room as a serviceable junior, and be able to devote more time to reading.

The course of reading during this year should include a practical work on Punctuation and English Composition. When the principles of both are once understood, these studies will be very easy to a young man engaged in a case room. I would recommend his reading Trench's *English Past and Present*, in order to acquire a taste for etymological study; and also to make himself familiar with some standard work on English synonyms. *Just the Word Wanted*, is a cheap little handbook for the desk. If the pupil in his first year adds to his knowledge of English history and politics, keeps up his classics (if any), improves himself in French or German (or both), learns something of the towns and counties in which his journal circulates, and dips into natural science, he will have done quite as much as may be fairly expected of him. The young journalist should not be too much of a bookworm; and a good knowledge of field sports must not in these days be neglected.

IN THE REPORTERS' ROOM.

The reporters' room in the *Midloamshire Gazette* is large, well-ventilated, and well-lighted. There is plenty of elbow-room for the whole of the reportorial staff at the long table in the centre of the room with a cross table at the top for the chief reporter, always spoken of as *the* Chief. This table forms the letter T, and there is a drawer for each member of the staff to keep note-books and other paraphernalia in. You know the Chief's place by the large Engagement Diary lying on a movable writing slope. The youngest junior's place is on his left, and the file of the *Gazette* for the current month is on his right hand. The members of the staff seat themselves according to fancy, and usually keep their respective places as long as they remain on the paper. Speaking-tubes attached to the Chief's table communicate directly with the editor and sub-editor, whose rooms are on the same floor. Another tube communicates with the master printer in the composing-room on the ground floor. The "shoot" let into the wall takes down copy and brings back proofs or anything to which the master printer wishes to call attention. There is also direct telephonic communication with the district offices in adjoining counties. There is nothing in the room to distract attention except a local almanac, and that is intended for use. The books of reference hide their shabby bindings in a dark corner, and consist of county Post Office Directories, Mitchell's Newspaper Directory, County Histories, two vols. of Classical and

other Quotations, Book of Dates, English Dictionary, Shakespeare, the Bible and Concordance, and a few odd Parliamentary Blue Books.* The files of the *Gazette* and local papers have a place to themselves. The Chief is a middle-aged man who was apprenticed on the *Gazette*, and never had an engagement elsewhere. He is a first-class note, but his local knowledge renders him invaluable. If any man is in doubt about who's-who or what's-what, he has only to ask the Chief. In the reporters' room his authority is never questioned.

Although the pupil who has been a year in the case room knows every one in the office, the custom is to introduce him into the reporters' room as though he were a stranger. The master printer brings him up and formally introduces him to the Chief.

The Chief (shaking hands): "I have heard a very good account of you from the master printer. I'm sure you'll be a credit to the *Gazette*, and one day be editor of *The Times*. Who knows? We shall get on famously. You write shorthand?"

Junior: "I can write one hundred and twenty words——"

Chief (smiling): "Never mind speed just now. I once knew a young man who wrote so fast that he burnt a hole through his book, so that his notes were

* A reporter would rather ask a question than consult a book. When writing out, a man will say to his colleague: "I have so-and-so on my note; what the dickens does it mean?" As a last resource, he takes down a book of reference. The Bible and Concordance are well-thumbed books in offices where sermons are looked after.

no good to him when he wanted to write out. My advice is: read what you write correctly from the first; speed is sure to come with practice. Have you got your tools with you?"

Junior: "Tools, sir?"

Chief: "Yes, tools. Let me see your pencil."

Junior proudly produces new leather case containing pencils and pen.

Chief: "Very neat indeed. Pencils sharpened at both ends—that's right; only badly sharpened. Give me your knife. Don't you think this is better? I always fancy that the man who writes with stumpy-looking pencils is slovenly in his work and bites his nails; yours are all right I see. Now we shall get on. Glad you have a pen; always write in ink when you can, but never be without a pencil, however good your fountain pen. A well-sharpened pencil never fails."

Junior: "I have no note book."

Chief: "The office provides note books. I'll give you one, and here's some copy-paper. Now you are equipped with tools—no young professional man requires so few as a journalist. What he wants most is brains—newspaper brains, and then with good health he'll get on."

Junior looks modestly conscious.

Chief (continuing): "I have only a few simple rules for you:—

"Be obedient to orders.

"Be punctual in all your engagements.

"Work quickly but never in a hurry.

"In all cases of doubt or difficulty consult your Chief and hide nothing.

"Remember always that you represent the *Midloamshire Gazette*, and that you are a member of the Fourth Estate of the realm. Now we shall get on famously."

The junior is formally introduced by the Chief to each member of the staff as he comes in, and then his initiation is complete.

The work of the junior is, from the first, educative. He is brought into personal contact with the editor and the sub-editor when they wish to dictate letters to him. "The Editor of the *Midloamshire Gazette* presents his compliments" to many distinguished people by the pen of the junior. Little office secrets come to his knowledge, and he learns insensibly how to keep silence, how correspondence on public affairs between men of the world is carried on, and the position which the editor of an English provincial newspaper may take with the best men of his county. Sometimes the editor dictates a short article, or sets the junior to pick out the statistical returns affecting the industries in his own sphere of influence from a Parliamentary Blue Book. The sub-editor also employs him to re-write printed cuttings from local newspapers, and the reader finds him useful occasionally for a few hours. In this way the personality of the junior is merged from the very beginning in the paper, and his self-consciousness is stimulated by seeing some of his very own handiwork in print the very first week.

The chief reporter keeps the junior active on inquiry work. He puts him down regularly in the Diary to call at the Police Station, the Fire Office, the Hospital, the Corn Exchange, the Coroner's and elsewhere. His general instruction is to look around generally, keep his eyes and ears open, and bring back his report.

At first a bright, intelligent junior has an exaggerated notion of the importance of little things and fancies that a thing must be important because it happened; but he soon learns to discriminate between:—

That which is important in itself:

That which is of public interest though of little importance in itself:

That which is neither important nor interesting to the general public.

For example:—

(*a*) A passenger train derailed.

(*b*) An escaped monkey climbed a church steeple and hanged itself to the weather vane.

(*c*) A drunken tinker picked up in the streets died in the Infirmary.

The junior who is hereafter to be worth his salt will appreciate these three items as follows:—Railway accident: full particulars if any one is injured. Escaped monkey: graphic description, attempts at rescue, public excitement, tragic ending, interview with owner. Splendid copy! Drunken tinker dead: three lines. He learns journalistic perspective through the eyes of his chiefs.

The young reporter cannot learn too soon *never to*

be in a hurry when note-taking. The man in a hurry usually suffers from want of self-discipline; he is generally a slovenly note-taker; and slovenly habits in note-taking mean a plentiful crop of trouble for himself and every one associated with him as long as he may live. No system of shorthand will permit carelessness in writing without revenging itself, and the more scientific the system the greater the need for precision. The most ridiculous and compromising mistakes occur through carelessness in writing. *When once habits of precision are formed there is no trouble in being precise.* It is as much trouble and pain to a precise, methodical man to be slovenly in his work as for a sloven to be precise and orderly. I wish to impress upon the young journalist that no labour is saved in writing slovenly, but trouble begins the moment he commences to write out. A careless note-taker is a nuisance to all his professional friends; and however much he may be liked for his social and other qualities, he is simply detested as a professional colleague. I will give an illustration. Mr. Careless is writing out at the same table as Mr. Jones on the opposition paper, and this sort of thing goes on every few minutes:—

Careless: "I say, Jones, refer to your note a minute. Thomson says the representation of the county is —— bad. What's the missing link?"

Jones (turning good-naturedly to the passage): "Wretchedly—wretchedly bad."

Careless: "So it is old man—should never have made it out."

Twenty times in an hour the careless man will

interrupt those working near him, and throw himself upon the kindness of his friends, to their ill-suppressed annoyance and loss of valuable time. And the worst of it is, no one refers to Mr. Careless because they are never certain that he is right.

The man who takes a clear note habitually writes legibly under all circumstances. I will give one instance of note-taking under difficulties in my own experience. When Lord Ramsay returned thanks to the electors of Liverpool after a bye-election he spoke from the balcony of his hotel, in front of which was a noisy, seething, dense crowd of excited people. It was night when the results of the poll were declared. Some reporters were in his lordship's room and some were in the street; those in the room could not get near the window, and those who were in the street had little chance of hearing and none of writing in the uproarious, jostling crowd. A street lamp-post was opposite the balcony, and up this a representative of the *Liverpool Mercury* swarmed, threw one arm around the horizontal bar for support, and took as elegant a note of his lordship's speech as most men would when sitting at ease at a table, and he was able to supply his *confrères*, badly placed in his lordship's room, with all they had missed. I shall never forget the performer and the performance.

When the junior can take a *verbatim* note (as he ought to be able to do at the end of the first year if he brings a working knowledge of shorthand with him from the case room) he will do well to practise condensation as he goes along so as not to be over-

burdened with notes when he comes to write out. The great value of speed in writing is to be able *whenever necessary, and for as long a time as is necessary,* to take an absolutely *verbatim* note. Perhaps only a sentence or a striking phrase or epigram is needed in one part of a speech, or four or five hundred words may be wanted in another part; but however long or short the passage, however rapid the speaker, the words should be taken with perfect accuracy. The reporter who has speed, and judgment how and when to use it, makes light work for himself, and is a valuable man in any newspaper office. Speed is a good servant when under proper control.

Another good and useful habit for the junior to practise is longhand reporting with shorthand "fly-notes" in the margin of his copy-paper. If only a short report is wanted it is a great comfort to be written up when the meeting is over. A report written in this way usually reads well, and the speaker's points are pretty certain to be preserved in any discussion. One advantage of this method to the young reporter is the early development of the useful faculty of listening and working at the same time. This kind of reporting requires great concentration on the part of the reporter habitually practising it.* The free use of longhand in newspaper reporting is to be recommended because:

---

* *Post.*—"Fly-notes" and longhand. Law reporting and note on the late Mr. W. F. Finlason.

It saves time and labour.
It reads well.
It stimulates and strengthens the intellect.

NEWSPAPER REPORTS.

Specimens of every description of report are found in a county weekly newspaper, and may be classified as:

The paragraph report.
Condensed.
Verbatim.
Descriptive.

The Paragraph, which looks so easy, is the severest test of intellectual capacity which the ordinary newspaper reporter can be put to, because he must have good assimilative and digestive powers to reproduce in the simplest manner the subject matter of discourse or debate. A good paragraphist in the reporters' room has prospects before him as sub-editor or summary writer on a first-class daily. As a rule, the man who writes a good paragraph report thinks clearly.

Condensed reports are usually written in the third person. For instance, if the speaker says, "I am of opinion that England is a great nation," the reporter writes, "*He was* of opinion that England *was* a great nation"; but he is at liberty to write, "*He was* of opinion that England *is* a great nation," and still preserve the third person style. Experts are divided in opinion as to the proper grammatical rules to follow

in third person reporting,* but the reporter is always safe if he follows the style familiar to the readers of the paper for which he is writing; or, best of all, consults his chief.

One great advantage of third-person reporting is that it lends itself so well to condensation, and another is that the reporter has a much freer hand in cutting down than when writing in the first person. By custom he has license to omit (1) everything introduced parenthetically; or (2) by way of illustration; or (3) mere rhetorical flourish. By confining himself to argument he can reduce a three-column speech to one column or less. The objection to third person reporting is, I think, its flatness. "My opinion is" is incomparably better reading than "his opinion was." When a third person speech runs to a column or more the reporter tries to give it an appearance of vivacity by introducing interruptions, when they occur, in the first person.

Verbatim reports are always written in the first person. When the reporter receives an order from his chief to give a certain speaker *verbatim*, his first care is to secure a perfect note; but in writing out he may, as a rule, omit one quarter of what was said, to the very great advantage of the reader, and without the speaker even missing it. In the hands of a judicious reporter much that is flabby disappears, and the speech strengthened and improved by the process of

---

* See remarks on the subject by the late Mr. T. A. Reed. *The Reporter's Guide*, pp. 44-48.

excision.* When condensation goes beyond this a first-person speech is said to be "full," and what is understood by "full" is that though redundant matter is cut out, whatever is important to the argument, epigrammatic, or "telling" is *verbatim.* The difference between "full" and *verbatim* is well understood by every working journalist; the reporter who writes a "full" takes upon himself responsibilities which the *verbatim* man escapes, but if he misses a single point his chief will probably desire a private interview with him the next day.

Descriptive reporting on weekly newspapers is now limited to neat introductions to flower shows and sports. Hunting may, however, be excepted, as a reporter who can follow the hounds has a free hand to

* Public men all the world over are often unconscious of their indebtedness to reporters. Some members of the Sydney, N.S.W., Legislative Assembly having recently found fault with the official reports of their speeches, the reporters retaliated by giving the speech of one of the hon. members of the Council as spoken, as follows:—"The reporters—ought not to—the reporters ought not to be the ones to judge of what is important—not to say what should be left out—but—the member can only judge of what is important. As I—as my speeches—as the reports—as what I say is reported sometimes, no one—nobody can understand from the reports—what it is—what I mean. So—it strikes me—it has struck me certain matters—things that appear of importance—are sometimes left out—omitted. The reporters—the papers—points are reported—I mean—to make a brief statement—what the paper thinks of interest—is reported." This type of oratory is very familiar to all reporters attending municipal, school board, and parish council meetings, and the universal experience is that the greatest offenders are the readiest to complain after the reporter has done his best "to make him read."

describe the run from "find" to "kill" in his best style. Descriptive reporting, which is largely on the increase on morning and evening newspapers, finds special favour in journals whose space is limited, and vivacity and sparkle are of the first consequence. This class of work requires experience and judgment. In reports of this kind the wit and humour, epigram, satire and eloquence of the speaker are preserved in his own words, and the reporter brings in the argument and the mannerisms of the speaker in his own way, and thus presents a living word picture with scenic effects to the reader. French reporters excel in their appreciation of dramatic effects on public platforms. Descriptive reporting with us is a branch of journalism, and the descriptive reporter, commonly known as a "Special" or "Big-type-man," need not be a practical journalist. The young journalist of literary ability who wishes to rank with the Big-type-man should study early—

How to grasp small incidents effectively.

How to "hit off" a situation with the least possible detail.

How to employ language fitted to the humour or pathos, joyousness or solemnity of the occasion.

If a man is sent to describe a great event and has eyes only for the central figure, his presentation of the whole show will be a sorry failure. The man who has accustomed himself to make something of small incidents will give life semblance to numerous *tableaux* for the setting of the central figure, and his account will be just the thing needed for a newspaper.

The effectiveness of a "situation" is destroyed if overcrowded with detail. For success with newspaper readers much depends on the "key" in which the description is written.

The young journalist aspiring to be a descriptive writer will find the advantage of having cultivated a taste for etymology.* Much of the success of descriptive "specials" is due to their knowledge of words and their delicate shades of meaning. A descriptive reporter can never be too rich in words when he knows their proper uses, and he will find that written words produce brain pictures of exquisite tints as real and vivid as colours to the senses.

PRESS ABBREVIATIONS.

The junior who has passed through the case room is as familiar as an old hand with cursive abbreviations used by press-men; and he also knows that abbreviations are popular with news compositors provided always that they are uniform and not eccentric. Some reporters abbreviate more than others, and telegraph clerks employed on special wires in newspaper offices abbreviate very freely. The abbreviations in common use are:—

l the	o of
t that	sh. shall
f for	w with
fm. from	anr. another
h have	or. other.

circ., circs., circumstance, circumstances.

* *Ante.*—Dr. Max Müller on the *Origin of Language;* and *Words and their Ways in English Speech*, by Greenough and Kittredge, may be read with profit.

The terminals *g* and *n* stand for *ing* and *ation* in considering and consideration, etc., and *t* for *out* and *ment* in such words as without (commonly written wt) and commencement. Could, would, should, etc., are abbreviated in the ordinary way. For Police Court and technical reporting there are well-established abbreviations as, pr (prisoner) prosr (prosecutor).

The following sentences will show cursive abbreviations in use:—

The pr sd t l case made out by l prosr was agst him. Wr he ws guilty ws anr qn. He had been out o employt f a long time and he hoped l Bench wd take t circe into considn. If discharged he wd leave l town.

[The prisoner said that the case made out by the prosecutor was against him. Whether he was guilty was another question. He had been out of employment for a long time and he hoped the Bench would take that circumstance into consideration. If discharged he would leave the town.]

With abbreviations the number of letters used by the reporter is 152, but when fully written out the number is increased to 224, or just one-third added.

This is above the average, as the words in many ordinary sentences do not admit of much abbreviation, but the average saving is considerable. Press contractions are accepted at all telegraph offices in the United Kingdom;* but "our own special" in country

* About the year 1875, when the practice of sending reports by wire was greatly on the increase, the Postmaster General sought and obtained the advice of practical newspaper men in London, who drew up a list of useful longhand abbreviations in common use.

districts will do well to find out first of all whether the operator can read an ordinary press message. I was once travelling in a disturbed district in Ireland and left a seventy-five word message at a local office for transmission. Sometime afterwards when I handed in a second I found all the village talent trying to decipher message number one. "If yer honor would plaise rade it, sure and I'll send it this minit," said the puzzled operator much relieved at my appearance. I never used another contraction under similar circumstances.

Technical words and words not in common use should be spelt in full to prevent possible error. The names of places and persons should be not only fully but plainly written. Some reporters write the proper names of persons in capital letters. Compositors are long-suffering individuals, and are popularly saddled with much blame for errors which would never have occurred if writers had been a trifle more considerate. When writing for book work, press contractions should not be used, as compositors engaged on book work affect not to understand them, and usually make a hash accordingly.

An expert reporter will comfortably write from notes a full average column of minion* in an hour and a-half. If he is writing a *verbatim* report and has a clear note he can do it in an hour, but this is top speed. I knew a gentleman once longhand three columns of

* A reporter always understands that minion is meant, but a Big-type man understands bourgeois, which means nearly 500 words less to write to fill a column.

a *Times* report well within three hours. This was done by Mr. Walpole, of the Hansard corps, in the old Smoking-room at Westminster, and it was beautiful copy throughout. Very few men can do this, for continuous rapid writing causes more physical strain than is commonly suspected. Telegraph operators working by sound turn out an almost incredible amount of copy every night without complaining greatly of hand fatigue.

PUNCTUATION.

The budding journalist in the case room learns newspaper punctuation almost automatically and—and this is important—in after life he points his copy so as to give the least trouble to sub-editors and printers. The science of pointing will thus be very easy to him when he studies it.* He should get into the habit of punctuating as he writes; the habit is easily acquired and saves him trouble; it also assists the compositor and proof-reader, and saves time and money in the correction of proofs.

The colon (:) is seldom used. The comma (,), semi-colon (;) and period (.) generally suffice to divide sentences intelligibly. Most of the hard work is thrown upon the useful comma, and there is a disposition in the present day to make it trench upon the domain of the semi-colon. The function of the colon has been practically usurped by the semi-colon, the

* A cheap and useful little book is *Stops, or How to Punctuate*, by Paul Allardyce. Thornton's *English Composition* (Self-Educator series) is worth having.

dash (—) and the period. The work of the comma has also been lightened by omitting it before and after such words as however, moreover, indeed, therefore, perhaps, etc.; on the other hand, it has been slightly increased by marking off words thrown in parenthetically. The parentheses and bracket signs are not favourites in newspapers.

Punctuation is very much simplified by directness of statement in composition, and by the use of short sentences now so much favoured by English journalists. If a man is foggy and ambiguous, or over-refined then he needs all the stops known to make him fairly intelligible. When a public speaker has fog on the brain the reporter has trouble.

Newspaper compositors dislike "high pointing," and when a proof is returned by a literary amateur black with points they speak of it contemptuously as "pepper-boxed." Literary journals and monthlies are more particular than newspapers.

Some men talk without stops, pausing from time to time for want of breath and then going on again; and some pause at the wrong places, thus doing their very best to mystify the reporter. In the *Pickwick Papers* Dickens gives the following specimen of speech without stops which is familiar to every newspaper man: "Take the book in your right hand this is your name and handwriting you swear that the contents of this your affidavit are true so help you God a shilling you must get change I haven't got it."

A man who speaks without commas in his voice often lays himself open to misrepresentation. There

is the story of a learned counsel representing a fair lady in a breach of promise case saying :—

"Tickle my client my lord——"

His Lordship (interrupting) :—

"Tickle her yourself, you are as capable of doing so as I, my learned friend."

What the counsel meant was that Tickle was the name of his client, and he should have spoken the sentence in this way: "Tickle, my client, my lord." Little comedies like this make very good copy.

A comma in a wrong place may bring a most serious accusation against a man. For example :—

"The deceased was discovered in a room, shot by her father." The fact being that it was the father who found (not shot) the girl.

A comma in the wrong place may injure a man's commercial credit, and render a newspaper liable to an action for libel and substantial damages. For example, to include John Thomas, Hull, in the list of bankrupts, when it was John Thomas Hull who was bankrupt.

An alteration in pointing may change entirely the original meaning. Take this sentence:

"What! Do you think I'll feed you for nothing and keep you in drink?" Then re-arrange it and you get not only a new but an opposite meaning:

"What do you think? I'll feed you for nothing and keep you in drink!"

In the earliest extant English comedy, *Ralph Roister Doister*, the powers of points are well shown in Andrew Merrygreeke's love letter :—

"Sweet Mistress, whereas I love you nothing at all,
Regarding your substance and riches chief of all;
For your personage, beauty, demeanour and wit,
I commend me unto you never a whit.
Sorry to hear report of your good welfare,
For (as I hear say) such your conditions are,
That ye be worthy favour of no living man,
To be abhorred by every honest man.
To be taken for a woman inclined to vice,
Nothing at all to virtue giving her due price," etc.

Differently pointed the epistle reads:—

"Sweet Mistress, whereas I love you nothing at all
Regarding your substance and riches; chief of all
For your personage, beauty, demeanour and wit
I commend me unto you. Never a whit
Sorry to hear report of your good welfare,
For (as I hear say) such your conditions are
That ye be worthy favour; of no living man
To be abhorred; of every honest man
To be taken for a woman inclined to vice
Nothing at all: to virtue giving her due price," etc.

Anecdotes of jumbles caused by wrong punctuation and through stops getting into wrong places by accident, are very common in literature; but one has only to select sentences from a book or journal and punctuate to fancy in order to see for oneself what wonderful changes can be made in their meaning with the least possible effort.

PARAGRAPH WRITING.

On the *Midloamshire Gazette* the junior spends a good deal of his time in the sub-editor's room and gets an early knowledge of the practical use of scissors and paste, and, what is far more important, learns how to write a neat paragraph. *The foundation of all good*

literary training is the paragraph. A good paragraphist is more rare than is generally suspected. The London representative of the *New York Herald* assured me that comparatively few correspondents in England could be trusted to write a cablegram to the satisfaction of the editor in New York. More points than words are wanted in a cablegram, but the rule, he said, was to send more words than points. Sub-editors everywhere appreciate good paragraph writers, and *the secret of good paragraph writing is clear thinking.* Know what you want to say and say it; then you have a good paragraph.* A bright junior in the sub.'s room has also the chance of catching early the valuable trick of writing telling local notes, and the proper use of books of reference.

Next to knowing how a par should be written ranks the knowledge how it should *not* be written, and the junior gets capital object lessons every week in how *not* to do it in the contributions of local correspondents. The local correspondent is not to be confounded with the district reporter who is an experienced man. The "local" is the newsagent or small tradesman in a town who busies himself with local matters, and local correspondents, as a body, are eyes and ears in out-of-the-way places for county newspapers. On the strength of his connection with a newspaper, the "local" sometimes dubs himself "journalist." He finds happiness in the fiction and hurts no one.

Some local correspondents write crisp pars, but have original ideas as to the use of words. For example:-

* See remarks on paragraph reports, p. 24.

"A fog *arrived* here at nine o'clock this morning and departed at two p.m."

"A fly *happened* yesterday—the first of the season."

"A primrose *took place* on Mr. Blank's farm which is a sign of early spring."

"Sanger's Circus performed here yesterday, and the *audience* was delighted."

The "local" glories in foreign words. He smuggles in the word *debris* whenever he writes about a fire; and when there is a procession, the town is certain to be *en fête*. I once received a par like this:

"Our worthy townsman, Mr. John Blank, was buried here on Tuesday last. The town was *en fête* on the occasion, every one doing their best to show respect to the memory of the deceased who was an Oddfellow."

After the junior has re-written a few hundreds of paragraphs of this description to the satisfaction of the sub-editor, he will have made some progress in his own education in the proper use of words.

THE REPORTER AT WORK.

At the end of his second year the young reporter who has passed through the case room ought to be able to take his full share of the reportorial work of his office; and I may here mention that if he has any decided literary ability his chiefs will have discovered it and shown themselves quite ready to give him scope for its exercise and development. If he has a taste for music and the drama, he will be sent frequently to theatres and concerts, for in many offices theatrical and

musical notices are written by the reporters. If he has natural aptitudes for descriptive writing he will be marked in the diary for flower shows, regattas, volunteer reviews, and society functions. He will be encouraged to write reviews, and occasional notes for the sub-editor either to work on or adopt.

The work on a well-established county newspaper is varied, pleasant and healthy, especially in large agricultural districts. Sometimes there is a great deal of driving or cycling to be done. I will give a week's engagements of the senior reporter from the Office Diary, and the copy written by him.

Monday.—Drive to Burton, ten miles, ploughing match. Dinner at five. County Member speaks. Three cols. Sleep at Burton.

Tuesday.—Drive to Washburn, five miles. Farmers' Dinner. County Member speaks again. Two cols. Return to Burton.

Wednesday.—Early train to Loamchester. Attend Assizes. Calendar light. One and a-half cols.

Thursday.—In office. Give editor good points for local notes. Read own proofs, etc.

Friday.—Town Council. Summary for second edition and three cols. to write for next week.

Saturday.—Look in at office. Football match in afternoon.

Sunday.—Dean's sermon. Attend Church, take note and then ask Dean for MS.

The work varies considerably according to the season of the year, but it is never monotonous.

THE JUNIOR'S INCOME.

The junior should receive about £80 during his last year. Salary is always a matter for arrangement when the junior is articled or apprenticed; but assuming he is to receive £50 during his last year, he will be able to make a total of £80 out of "expenses" and correspondence to daily papers.

When a reporter is sent out of town on duty he is allowed hotel and other expenses on a liberal scale. If he spends his allowance, that is his look out; but with ordinary economy he can save one-third of his allowance. Thrift is a good and paying habit to cultivate, and a young man can save out of his office expenses without being mean. No one expects him to be extravagant.

The second source of added income is newspaper correspondence. In most old-established county newspaper offices the reporting staff supply news items to daily provincial and metropolitan papers, trade papers, and London news agencies. Sometimes the correspondence attached to an office is very valuable, and whether the results are "pooled" and divided in certain proportions, or distributed in some other way, the junior in his last year should receive a sensible addition to his income. The sum I have mentioned (£80) is a fair estimate of the young reporter's income during his last year. If sixteen years of age when he entered the case room, he will have learnt his profession and earned £80 in his twentieth year.

Should he wish to remain he will probably be offered a salary of £70; he will have more out-of-

town work to do, and, consequently, more expenses to receive, and he will also have a larger share in the correspondence "pool." He may calculate on receiving from £120 to £130 a year as duly qualified reporter; and this sum represents his market value, whether he remain, or whether he accept an engagement on a daily provincial newspaper.

TALKS TO JUNIORS.

A clear brain is the best capital a young journalist can have, and the better he stocks his brain the more value he is from a professional point of view. I strongly recommend every junior to get an indexed common-place book and preserve whatever comes under his own observation relating to men and women becoming popular or already celebrated. The value of a common-place book properly indexed increases with age. Apart from intrinsic value, the habit of recording observation develops the faculty of observing. The reporter who doesn't observe has missed his vocation.

Mr. George Augustus Sala, Mr. Joseph Hatton (writer of "Cigarette Papers"), Mr. H. W. Lucy ("Toby M.P." of *Punch*) have all confessed the value of common-place books to them. The author of "How to Write for the Press," himself a journalist, says he makes a good deal of money out of clippings from newspapers. His method is simple and practical. Any young journalist who gets the papers from the editor's or sub-editor's room can, by working on the same lines, make money for himself and establish a

connection which may be one day valuable. He says: "As a general rule I have twenty or thirty articles of a certain kind on the stocks at the same time; and this is how I go about it. Having in the daily discharge of my editorial duties to peruse a large number of newspapers, I have accustomed my eye to catch all the little oddities of daily life reflected therein. Here will be a par. about an amusing Police Court case, there an account of some strange happening, a wonderful escape from death, an extraordinary suicide, a surprising adventure, or in another corner there may be a witty story of some eminent person. These are all as valuable to me as bricks to a bricklayer. My blue pencil ticks them off at once; later on they are cut out . . . and then they are placed in envelopes bearing the names of the subjects they have suggested. Thus I turn to my pigeon holes at this moment and find a large bundle of envelopes, some full of clippings like ripe pea-pods, and others as thin as early fitches, on which are written such titles as 'Drawing the Long Bow' (American Yarns), 'Players and their Pets,' 'Motor-Car Mishaps,' 'Stories of the Queen,' 'Hairbreadth Escapes,' 'Cabinet Secrets' (How they are revealed), 'English as 'tis Writ,' 'Curiosities of Journalism,' 'Scottish Humour,' 'New Woman Freaks,' and so on and so on. The bulky envelopes I shall presently empty of their contents and weld these into articles; the thin ones grow stouter day by day, and new ones are constantly being added, so that for this kind of article (for which there is an inexhaustible demand) there is an unlimited supply of material."

Having clear brains, the junior's duty to himself is to stock them with the best goods—he should set about forming a library and cultivating the art of thinking for himself.

First, about books. Public libraries are all very well, but if a young man buys a book and makes marginal notes in it he has a peculiar property in that book which nothing else can give him, and a relationship is set up between him and the author which mere reading never establishes. The first book I purchased out of my own earnings was an edition of Shakespeare. I have several editions now, but if I want to find anything it comes quicker to my hand in the old copy than in any other. What books a young man who adopts journalism as a profession should collect must depend very much on the bent of his mind. As a journalist he should be acquainted with the religion, the constitutional history and the social economy of his country, and his aim should be to understand *principles.*

The book most largely quoted from in this country by public men is the Bible, and Shakespeare, perhaps, ranks next.* I would therefore say, be well acquainted with both, and commence your library with them.

---

* Familiar quotations from Shakespeare are sometimes thought to come from the Bible. The Rev. J. N. Knights narrates that, after giving a Shakespearean recital he was greatly taken to task by a dear old saint, who prayed that in future he would confine his expositions strictly to scripture, and so prepare the people for "that undiscovered country from whose bourne no traveller returns." The dear old soul was talking Shakespeare without knowing it.

History should come next. Green's "Shorter History," and Frederick Wicks's "Constitutional History," are within the reach of every one, and will serve to show the necessity for extended historical study. The taste once acquired for historical reading, books will be found in abundance. Adam Smith's "Wealth of Nations" will make the science of social economy intelligible, and prepare the way for John Stuart Mill and Herbert Spencer. I would add Lubbock's (Lord Avebury's) "Pleasures of Life," if only for his essays on the Choice of Books and Education. Books of reference which may be found at the office need not be troubled about at first—they are expensive, but well-bound editions of Gibbon's "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," the "Annals" of Tacitus, and fugitive volumes of Bohn's Standard Library can often be picked up cheap on second-hand book stalls. When a young man once begins collecting his mental horizon widens, and empty shelves fill up apace without his being called upon to practise much self-denial. I say nothing about poetry, novels and general literature, because so much must depend upon individual tastes. I only say, commence as early as you can to form the nucleus of a library. Speaking for myself, I never learnt anything which did not at some time or other come useful to me in my professional work.*

Read standard authors and you will almost insensibly form a *style* when you write "original" articles; but your style should be your own and not another's.

---

* *Post.*—Remarks on Interviewing.

Let your own habit of thought and expression come to the surface; then your article will be distinctive and, in its proper sense, original. New ideas are rare; what is "original" is the manner of dressing them up. If three practised writers describe the same incident, each will show some quality of himself—one may be sympathetic, another humorous, and the third matter-of-fact. What newspapers to-day want is freshness, and this quality must come from the writer himself.

When writing an article be certain of your facts. If the facts are wrong everything is wrong; no amount of "style" will make good an article founded on erroneous statements of fact. The facts being right, take care that your inferences and deductions are natural, or the reader will suspect your motive. Write the article in the style best suited to the subject, and when you have written all you can fairly say, stop, or you will bore the reader. You must also be governed by the *tone* of the journal you are writing for. What suits one class of readers disgusts another. Most country weeklies take their tone from politics and religion, and whilst on the staff the reporter must identify himself with its particular tone. He is the paper and must not compromise it.

The young reporter should join the Institute of Journalists, and prepare himself for any examinations which the Council may hereafter require before granting certificates or diplomas.* The young man who has in his spare time cultivated a taste for history,

---

* See Chapter VI. Journalism as a profession.

literature, science and language will have no difficulty in passing any educational tests which the Council have in contemplation. It may be safely said that in future a member of the Institute will, other things being equal, be preferred by editors and proprietors to non-members. Particulars can always be obtained from the Secretary in London, or from the Secretary of the provincial district in which the applicant resides.

I would not have you suppose that a young reporter should have his nose perpetually on the literary grindstone. Nothing of the kind; he should cultivate the little graces of society, and if he can sing a good song and make a bit of a speech on occasion, he will get along on "greased ways" as the Americans say, when another fellow will be stuck in the mud. People like a man who can do something and say something gracefully at short notice. A reporter who can sing a good song after dinner will get more out of judges of fat stock at Agricultural Shows, and the promoters of social functions everywhere, than a silent representative of the Fourth Estate. The toast to the Press has fallen into disuse because so very few men respond to it. To be able to sing and to speak gives a man a double advantage; but I think I would rather be able to sing a good song tolerably than be able to make a fairly good speech. After dinner people prefer songs to speeches. I once knew a reporter on a country paper who always sang a song when called on to respond for the "Press"; and there was no more popular man in the whole county.

As a rule reporters are very bad speakers. When

they get on their legs their tongues cleave to the roofs of their mouths, and they suffer all the horrors of stage fright. The young reporter should practise until he is able to get on his legs and speak sensibly for a few minutes whenever called upon. It will be an immense advantage to him through his professional career, and is certain to popularise the paper which he represents. I would say to every young reporter: join a good debating society and study the art of speaking gracefully and well. You cannot commence too soon.

The young reporter often finds himself isolated on entering on a new engagement in a strange town; but the young man who knows how to make himself agreeable and can do something—sing a song or play the violin, can dance, and play lawn tennis, and talk golf, cricket and football, will soon get the *entrée* into agreeable social circles and rub off the angles so conspicuous in young men who live in note-books and talk little but shop. The most successful journalists I have met in London and the provinces have been men of agreeable manners and varied accomplishments.

There are some things which the young reporter should not do. I would say

DON'T

Take notes with kid gloves on. A reporter is a worker.

Think when you write out a good speech that you supplied the brains.

Forget that unfurnished brains have a dull market and that prices rule low.

Make it a point of always arriving late at a meeting.

Leave behind the idea that a reporter is other than a "gentleman of the press."

Go to bed with your note-book full. To-morrow brings its own work; and the unexpected always happens when a man has his note-book full.

CHAPTER III.

A PROVINCIAL DAILY NEWSPAPER.

THE reporter who has been trained on a country weekly enters a new sphere when he becomes one of the staff of a leading daily provincial newspaper—a sphere of activities wherein what is familiar is different, and what is new is a revelation. If he has a pet cobweb in his brain it is speedily brushed away. "No room for cobwebs here" is written legibly enough in every department, and the young man who can't read the writing usually disappears at the end of the first month.

The young man who has been fairly well drilled on a weekly has nothing to fear, though much to learn; and the first thing he learns is, *How to adapt himself to new conditions.* A reporter should be not only "all things to all men," but at home in every new place.

In the case room he will probably notice composing machines at work, but with all the rest he is familiar. In the machine room, too, everything is on a large scale, but he already knows the mechanical arrangements of the machines which print and fold ready for delivery with almost miraculous speed. What

will probably be new to him will be the stereotyping processes. In the machine room he will get his cue to the whole establishment: untiring energy and speed producing magnificent results.

The ambition of the country weekly reporter is to get an engagement on the staff of a daily, because it is considered a step upward in the professional career, and one step nearer the distinction of becoming a member of the "Gallery" at Westminster, which is the topmost rung in the reportorial ladder.

REPORTERS AT WORK. "FLY NOTES" AND LONGHAND.

The young reporter on a weekly meets the reporters of daily papers so often that he obtains a practical knowledge of the conditions under which he will work and what will be expected of him on a daily. For example:—the weekly gives much longer reports of county meetings than the daily. The weekly reporter has to take a fairly full note of the speeches of little men, which the daily reporter disposes of in a few lines. The weekly will come out with two or three columns of a meeting which the daily will dispose of in half a column, or a column. After the meeting is over the real work of the weekly man commences—probably he will sit up until midnight, "slogging away" at his notes, whereas the daily man will often have written up by the time the meeting is over.

Sitting by the side of a daily reporter and watching him at work is the very best object lesson for a young

man willing to learn the value of longhand to a shorthand reporter. The daily reporter invented the "fly note" taken in the margins of his copy paper, and every one should understand the use of and practise the "fly note" before seeking an engagement on a daily. An experienced hand will easily longhand the whole of his report without taking any shorthand notes except of such telling passages and quotations as he wishes to write out in full. Probably he will shorthand the peroration of the principal speaker so as to preserve its rhetorical effect. Whilst the complimentary speeches are being fired off the reporter writes in the passages indicated by the fly notes; the copy is then ready for the printer, and the reporter is free until his next engagement. Some men make more use than others of shorthand, but always manage to write from one-half to two-thirds of a column report during a meeting, and this is a wonderful help to him, especially if it is late at night before he can get to his office. So much late copy is now poured into a daily paper over the wires that late local copy is looked on with disfavour by the chiefs. It is now a necessity at late meetings for the daily reporter to longhand everything he can. What is at first done of necessity soon becomes a habit—and a good one too.

The free use of longhand in reporting develops and strengthens some qualities of the mind which reliance upon shorthand leaves untouched.* Whilst long-

* See previous chapter.

handing, an unusual amount of concentration is required of the reporter. The speaker is ahead of him almost from the beginning, and he must be all ears for what is being said whilst he is actually writing what has been said. He must catch the speaker's meaning readily and group his arguments when necessary by bold paraphrases which call largely upon his own knowledge of the proper uses of words. When the reporter finds himself too far behind he can readily catch up by the fly notes and then go on longhanding again. Some can never acquire the habit of longhanding a speaker, and some are too timid to try. It is, however, worth cultivating, as I know by experience, having reported in this way Lord Beaconsfield, Mr. Gladstone, Mr. John Bright, Lord Salisbury, Lord Iddesleigh, Sir William Harcourt, Lord Rosebery, and other leading politicians, telegraphing my report slip by slip as written, or as fast as the telegraph messengers enabled me. I do not remember ever having received a complaint on the score of inaccuracy. There is a movement and swing about reports written in this way which readers like. If a speaker notified that he would be over an hour then I seldom took any notes when writing my column; but if he expected to be under an hour then I took notes to enable me to make up my quantity.* Some public men seem

* Whilst longhanding speakers the reporter's brain may be likened to a machine receiving words at the average rate of 130 or 140, and digesting them for delivery at the rate of about 35 words per minute. When the digestive process is difficult then the "fly note" comes into operation and relieves congestion.

designed by nature to give the reporter trouble. The late Marquis of Lothian was one of these. Whilst you were listening to him he seemed easy enough, but when you attempted to follow him he got away from you in the most unaccountable manner. A friend who was waiting for his turn in the Lords' Gallery passed me the following one evening:—

> "Lives there a man with ears so quick,
> So skilled in art Stenographic,
> Fingers so facile, that he can
> Report the Lord of Lothian?"

The most difficult men to longhand are close reasoners who speak in syllogisms. The more matter the fewer words is the rule. The easiest man to longhand amongst out first rank public men is Sir William Harcourt, who is not rapid, is sufficiently verbose and gives the reporter notice when he is going to say a good thing by a self-satisfied chuckle following an almost imperceptible pause in delivery. Mr. Joseph Chamberlain is a good man to longhand and so is the Earl of Rosebery, and both have little tricks of manner putting the reporter on the alert—you hear a metallic click in Mr. Chamberlain's throat, and Lord Rosebery pauses, stiffens himself up and "looks the part"—when a good thing is coming. The Marquis of Salisbury is different, because in whole sentences he may use only just sufficient words—and the right words too—to convey the thought which he is working out. At such moments the fly note comes in—the greater part of the noble lord's set speeches may,

however, be longhanded for a column report without much difficulty.

Longhanding is very much more practised now by good shorthand reporters than when I was first engaged on the staff of a daily newspaper. Congresses and conferences and all-day debates can be written up as they go along. I remember once attending a diocesan lay conference which lasted all day, and when it was over I had written up about five columns. A gentleman, now a member of the bar and an M.P., took a very full note throughout for his paper (a weekly which published some time the next day) sat up all night, and with the assistance of a dictatee, turned out a report a little more than two columns in excess of what I had written up when the conference was closed; and this was very good, though very fatiguing, work for so small an advantage. When readable summaries are wanted at once longhand is invaluable.

The new recruit will note that the daily paper man is methodical in his work; that when making inquiries he goes direct to the root of the matter; and that when he writes out he avoids redundancy and ornamentation. The young man fresh from a weekly paper will unlearn some of his leisurely habits and smarten up a bit, and also throw off any habit he may have acquired of "dressing up" with the idea that "style" is everything. The daily reporter is satisfied with facts. "A primrose by the river brim a yellow primrose is to him," and if anything more is wanted the daily can send out a special to find it. No young

man on a daily should feel discouraged because he has something to unlearn. I had to unlearn many things, and I now know that I was making progress whilst unlearning.

The reporters' room on a daily is very similar to that already described. The Chief has absolute control over the staff, and is in constant touch with the editorial department. Sometimes he has a little "den" to himself. In the North and in Scotland the Chief marks the diary of engagements; but in the South and West of England this is done by the Sub-editor. The custom differs, but the staff is not affected. The experienced reporter knows what to write, and his copy goes direct to the case room. If something unexpected happens at a meeting so that he thinks it desirable to write a column instead of half a column, he informs his Chief. It very often happens that when the reporter returns to the office he is told to cut down what he has already written to one-half, or even to re-write the whole in a summary par, because something of the first importance has happened in some other quarter of the globe—the assassination of a Czar or President means the wholesale cutting down of copy in every daily newspaper office to make room for "scenes" and biographical details. Until the formes are actually in the machine room no man is certain that his report will appear as he wrote it. It goes to the heart of a young reporter to "cut down" his own copy, but old hands are callous. When cutting down matter already in type (this process is usually called "blue pencilling" or "blueing out,"

because a blue pencil is used by the sub.), the reporter who has obtained practical knowledge in the case room will save the comp. time and trouble by making the metal lines read with the least amount of over-running. I have known compositors re-set rather than follow the markings of reporters deficient in necessary elementary knowledge.

NEWSPAPER OFFICES.

The daily newspaper offices in large towns rank with the most imposing buildings, and are specially adapted for newspaper work—machine rooms and stereotyping foundry in the basement, composing and jobbing rooms upstairs, publishing, advertisement and inquiry offices on the ground floor, and separate entrances for every department. The editor's "den," full of dust and cobwebs, and ill-ventilated and insanitary rooms for reporters and sub-editors, scarcely big enough to "swing a cat" in, have happily disappeared. The old order of things has given place to new to the advantage of everyone.* In an office with which I am familiar in a provincial town the Manager's room is beautifully upholstered. The editor's room has the appearance of a literary man's private library, and the assistant editor and leader-writers are well accommodated. The sub-editors' room has separate tables for five subs., and another room is fitted up with the latest electrical instruments and telephones.

* Originally newspaper copy was written in the garret, set up in the kitchen, and printed in the cellar. The evolution of the newspaper office has kept pace with the evolution of the newspaper.

EDITORS AND SUBS. AT WORK.

All daily provincial newspapers have offices in London; those which are far from the Metropolis have special wires, and it is in the sub-editor's room that the young reporter will first note the restless energy of daily newspaper life. The instrument room is often a portion of the sub-editor's room screened off, and here the telegraph clerk works from seven o'clock at night until the early hours of the morning, writing out what is transmitted over the private wire from Fleet Street. A few of the principal dailies have more than one wire, and the clerks write everything out by sound. Closing prices on the Stock Exchange and markets come first, then advertisements and important matter which cannot be sent down by train. Parliamentary reports, private bill committees, political gossip, London letter pars., legal and other reports are received in turn. Until past midnight the private wires are worked "red hot," and everything is distributed amongst the sub-editors.

Concurrently there is an unceasing flow of messages over the public wire—Reuter's telegrams from the ends of the earth, cablegrams from special correspondents, either in cypher or so closely "packed" that an expert is wanted to write them out; then the London Press Agencies send their home and foreign services; every train pours in parcels from district correspondents, and the late trains from London bring all that can be possibly sent to relieve the special wires. Not a single moment is wasted in the sub-editor's room.

Each man has his work—foreign, commercial, local—and everything is dealt with as it comes in methodically, but without haste, although everything is done at high pressure. The number of sub-editors varies; when there is pressure any one disengaged in the reporters' room may be called on. From seven o'clock in the evening until the paper goes to press with the first edition (probably three o'clock in the morning) the subs. are at work; then there is a pause; and then work begins again and continues until the town edition is sent down to the machine room. Then the subs. quietly wash their hands, light up, and stroll home to bed. In some offices, as in London, an "Emergency Editor" is in charge after the first edition is on the machine.

The sub. is the mainspring on a daily newspaper, and he seems to live in his work and for his work. The first thing he does in the morning is to examine several leading newspapers to see if his own paper had missed anything of importance; then he trots down to the office to see what is moving. The chief sub. has generally a conference with the manager and editor every morning, and the chief reporter may be called in in order to settle whether the paper for the next day shall be eight pages or twelve.

In some offices the manager is also editor; he is managing-editor, and his time is very precious. When he comes down in the morning a pile of letters awaits him. Then he attends to the notes entered in the complaint books kept by the sub. and chief reporter. These complaints affect all departments

—the humble local correspondent, the famous "specials" at home and abroad, the London correspondent, and the great News Agencies. There is always something or somebody to be complained of and receive a rap over the knuckles. A well-kept complaint book is the quinine of the establishment, which the editor serves out daily to keep up the tone of his staff and contributors. Every morning brings its tale of woe to the editor of something neglected, something overdone, something underdone, something badly done. When the editor is able to praise someone he's happy. The letters of complaint are got through as soon as possible, but if anything affects a gentleman on the staff he undergoes an experience in the editor's room, which he is quite willing to regard as "private and confidential." A second interview of the same character is generally followed by dismissal. The "mildest-mannered" editor I ever knew used to give a man three chances; but, as a rule, a staff man has only two lives. To be allowed to "star" one is the exception.

When there is a manager the editor usually writes the first leader, but if he is managing-editor, then his time is taken up in discussing social and political matters with the literary staff. Where a specialty is made of book reviewing the editor exercises general supervision, and seldom has time for more. The editor has very little time for visitors, and those who wish to see him are requested to state the nature of their business on their visiting card.

Young reporters are often drafted into the sub-

editor's room; and the young man who has had a good all-round training on a weekly, realises the advantage of having been taught the art of paragraph writing. On a daily his perceptive faculties are quickened and his judgment matured, but he already knows his business, and he will be marked down at once as a good man to call on whenever wanted.

Some young reporters dislike "subbing" and remain reporters for the rest of their lives, but the young man who wishes to become a complete journalist with the view of getting a London engagement, will work willingly in the sub-editorial room, especially in an office having a London wire.

EVENING EDITIONS.

When an up-to-date evening paper is published in the same office, a separate editorial staff is required. The staff reporters write pars. and brief full-head reports for the evening, and town and local correspondents send in items of special interest reserving fuller reports for the morning paper. Some evening papers have private wires, and are supplied with all the news of the Metropolis. In the absence of a special wire, the evening is supplied with the full news services of the great News Agencies, and so obtains everything of public interest from Dan to Beersheba abroad, and from John O'Groat's House to the Land's End at home.

Work in an office where there is an evening edition, smartens up a young man if he's at all inclined to be slow. The London representative of *The New York*

Sun once said to me: "We want for our papers ideas without any wool between them." Provincial evening papers to-day want no more "wool" than is sufficient to keep the ideas from collision. The slow young man learns to get rid of his "wool" and to write pars. bristling with business points.

REPORTING IN SECTIONS.

In the reporters' room the young recruit is early initiated into the science of saving time by a division of labour. When an important speech is to be delivered by a prominent statesman at night, and a *verbatim* report is wanted immediately, a corps of six men is sent. The Chief will probably take charge of the corps, keep time, and send off the copy by office boys. Reporting by corps is one of the simplest things in the world if there's no hitch. Six men can take and write out a *verbatim* note of speeches from start to finish by taking short turns. The Chief makes out a list as follows:—

Senior	A.	G.	N.	T.
Smith	B.	H.	O.	V.
Brown	C.	I.	P.	W.
Jones	D.	K.	Q.	X.
Robinson	E.	L.	R.	Y.
Black	F.	M.	S.	Z.

Each man enters in his note-book the letters opposite his name. Each letter means a section, and Senior will folio his copy A1, A2; G1, G2; N1, N2; T1, T2, etc. At the end of section A he will write "End of Section, B follows," and so with regard to his other

sections. If each man takes notes for five minutes, the above list provides for two hours' speaking. Each man will have twenty minutes' note-taking, and one hundred minutes for writing up, which is ample, no smart man needing more than twenty-five minutes to longhand five minutes' note-taking—when "cheers" and "applause" are frequent a man writes up well within his time allowance. If the last man "Z" has a full five-minutes' turn, then twenty-five minutes after a meeting is over, every line is written up in sections which the Master Printer can give out without re-folioing. If the place of meeting is a long way off and the copy has to be telegraphed, then the representatives of several newspapers may join together and form a "ring"*; and as time is of the first consequence, the gentleman in charge will probably prefer two minutes' to five minutes' turn—in which case the speeches should be written up within ten minutes after delivery. The copy is sent away in sections to the Telegraph Office and the work of transmission goes on whilst the speaker is on his legs. If, however, there

* With six men on a corps there should be no over-lapping; with five the best plan is to begin with two-minute turns and gradually lengthen them, so if there is any over-lapping, it will be towards the end. With less than five there must be over-lapping—that is, a man will be called on to take his second turn at note-taking before he has written up his first section. Over-lapping is the very mischief late at night. The largest ring of which I have any personal knowledge was formed in the Music Hall, Edinburgh, November, 1879, when Mr. Gladstone opened his Midlothian campaign. We were twenty-three, and took two-minute turns. In the history of reporting, this ring is a curiosity.

is the slightest hitch through careless folioing of copy, or neglect to write the section letter, or omission to write "end of section" in its proper place, trouble begins. The duties of the gentleman in charge, though light, require judgment, and if he should have one or two slow men on his corps he should give them time allowance. He should also avoid calling on the next man in the middle of a sentence. An important part of his duty is to see that all the sections are in order.

When taking short turns in a "corps" or "ring," there is no time for reading over or revising copy, and the young reporter will at once realise the benefit of his previous practical training on a paper where he was required to revise his copy carefully, until he could rely on himself to write from notes without revision being absolutely necessary.

THE DESCRIPTIVE WRITER AT WORK.

A leading provincial daily sending its own corps to a meeting would also probably send a descriptive man to do the "big brush painting," and a member of the editorial staff to take notes for a leader. As a rule, leaders are written from proofs—one good reason for getting the copy set up at the earliest moment so that the leader writer may have time to turn out his column; and another very good reason why the reporter's transcript should be accurate, otherwise the poor leader-writer may be betrayed into grave error, and the paper itself be badly compromised. As

a rule this kind of work is admirably done, even under circumstances when error would be very excusable.*

The descriptive writer on such occasions does not confine his attention to the state of the weather, behaviour of the crowds, decorations or incidents and ephemera of that sort, though he is careful not to neglect them in his word picture. He is expected nowadays to show knowledge and familiarity with the chief figure of public interest at the moment. When Lord Rosebery visited Liverpool (Feb. 1902), the descriptive writer of the *Liverpool Post* used his reminiscences with admirable effect. Twenty years before, Lord Rosebery appeared on a Liverpool platform in the time of Mr. Gladstone's Midlothian Campaign, and then, said the descriptive writer:

"It was a young and smooth-faced, boyish-looking man, with big blue eyes, a rather innocent smile, and

* Birmingham has a genius early developed for handling mass meetings and for enabling press men to work in comfort. When John Bright spoke with authority, it was not unusual for sixty or seventy reporters to be seated under the platform in the Drill Hall. The two Birmingham dailies on such an occasion sent separate corps, the Press Association and the Central News sent a full corps each, the Manchester Ring (including Liverpool, Leeds and Sheffield) was in full strength. *The Times* in those days was separately represented, and all the London and principal provincial dailies sent special descriptive writers. The Post Office supplied a clerk at each end of the reporters' table, who entered up the copy as written under the various heads of "descriptive," "summary," "column," and "verbatim." The paging was attended to and the sections examined to see that they ended and ran on properly, and a small army of uniformed messengers carried the copy to the telegraph office. It was always a pleasure to be sent to Birmingham on special work.

a pleasant, laughing face, who introduced the great Prime Minister to his constituents. Very pleasant were the relations of the two men, the unconcealed reverence which did not prevent a certain sturdy independence on the part of the younger, and an almost paternal affection of the elder to his political child.

"Different was the Lord Rosebery who greeted the Liberals of Liverpool, assembled in the Philharmonic Hall on Friday. A grey-headed man much thinner than he was twenty years ago—a man with lined and thoughtful face when in repose, but still sweet in animation—a man who had passed from the forward gaze of early years to the inward glances of maturity —stood before his cheering auditors last night."

I will give one more specimen of descriptive writing. The central figure is Sir Michael Hicks-Beach introducing his last Budget in the House of Commons.

"With his whole figure straightened like Sir Willoughby Patterne's, to the erectness of the letter I, and with his hands clasped behind his back, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach presented the figure of a man of resolute individuality. In honour of the Budget he wore a frock coat, which appeared to add to his height. His face looked sterner even than usual, as if he had recently fed on figures, and it was relieved only by the little curl which escapes on the left forehead. To use another Meredithian simile, he might have been regarded as a Phœbus Apollo turned fasting friar. When he tired of the erect attitude he leant his right elbow on the box and dipped his left

fingers into the palm of the right hand, while he held Sir William Harcourt with his glittering eye—an eye cold and passionless, but sometimes lit with a gleam of pale humour or humanity. His notes—the earlier portion typewritten, and those dealing with the future in his own writing—lay on the box, and when he wished to quote figures he held the slip gingerly in his left hand, a most lady-like hand, with a wrist that drooped languidly."

A FRIENDLY CHAT.

This is my experience: if a young man has good health and a healthy mind, the work of a daily provincial newspaper is very enjoyable. If he has a dash of adventure in his constitution and enjoys the excitement of peril on land and sea, chance will often favour him.

A friend of mine was once told off to write a description of the behaviour of a new ship during her trial trip. Everything had gone well, and the guests were seated in the cabin for luncheon—such a luncheon; such sparkling wines which had "sucked their fires from Southern suns"; and such an appetite, with teeth well set—when, crash! the ship was cut down to the water's edge; the luncheon foundered with the ship, and the gentlemen of the press returned wet, cold, hungry and forlorn, as shipwrecked mariners.

A colleague and myself were being driven a few miles out of Edinburgh in a two-wheeled machine (*Anglicè*, dogcart) and the animal bolted as we were

descending a steep hill at the bottom of which was a bridge with a low stone parapet. The road curved sharply to the right. My colleague and the driver sawed at the bit for all they knew, but it was rigid. Things looked serious. The other side of the bridge was a precipice. To jump was hazardous; to remain death. We were only a few yards from the bridge when the driver shouted, "Sit close!" and began to whistle, "Scots, wha hae." The tune acted as a charm. The horse let go the bit; we drove around the curve at a fearful rate and shivered as we looked on the rocks below the parapet. The horse had been taught some tricks in a show; and, fortunately for all of us, the driver remembered the controlling magic of "Scots, wha hae" at the right moment!

I have never been in any serious accident, though I have had many "near shaves." A reporter seems to be either on the spot or very near it when the unexpected happens, and an old hand generally travels with a few telegraph passes in his pocket. Who knows what may come in his way? And a telegraph pass is as good as cash.

In railway travelling, select the coach nearest the centre: it is the most comfortable if you have any copy to write, and the *safest*. If you want to write in a carriage which rocks a good deal, stand up.

The right use of technical books of reference in constant use in a newspaper office is learnt in the sub-editor's room. No man can remember everything, but he can learn—

What book to consult.

What part of the book to turn to.

The next best thing to knowing a thing is to know where to find it without delay.

The revolving book-case in the sub.'s room will probably contain "Debrett's Peerage and County Families," "Who's Who," "Men of the Time," "Book of Dates," "The Statesman's Parliamentary Year Book," "American Statesman's Year Book," "Almanack de Gotha," The Church and Nonconformists' Year Books, Army, Navy, and Shipping Lists, Gazetteer, Atlas, Stud Bood, Year Books on Cricket, Football and other sports; good Dictionaries, Concordances, Joint Stock Companies, and books on trade and commerce. These will answer my purpose. Every one of these books has its own peculiar arrangement, and wants knowing. A man unfamiliar with them may waste much valuable time in hunting for what he wants, and even give it up in despair, whereas the man who knows, turns to the page at once. For instance, if I want to know how a naval officer should be dressed at any official or semi-official function, I can find it in a moment in the "Navy List," which the uninstructed might not dream of consulting on a mere point of etiquette.

The young reporter who commenced forming a library, as suggested in the previous chapter, will, when on a daily paper, have every inducement to add to his collection of standard authors, and to pursue systematically a course of study in any direction towards which he has intellectual leanings. History, politics,

and biography are three essentials to the young man who intends—not wishes merely, but intends—to rise. However general his reading, he should endeavour to master one subject at least. The opportunity is almost certain to arise when he will be able to turn it to account and so lay the foundation for becoming a specialist. The merest smattering of knowledge is not, however, to be despised; and I have known some out-of-the-way studies bring profit and enjoyment.

I would say the time devoted to modern languages is never wasted; and I would also say, learn, if you can, to speak both French and German. If you can speak well enough you are certain to be able to read, but you may read for your own enjoyment without being able to speak a sentence or understand what you hear. In large provincial towns there are classes in which modern languages can be learnt colloquially, and the young reporter who is in earnest will have no difficulty in finding the necessary time for study. If he has but the barest elementary knowledge of the classics, he should add to it, and certainly not neglect the old English dramatists. With history, language, and the drama, the young journalist will create an appetite for reading which will never be satisfied.

As I have avoided laying down any hard and fast lines, I would say there is always on the staff of a newspaper some gentleman only too happy to give sound, practical advice to any young man having the good sense to ask for it—at all events, this has been my experience.

I consulted a working journalist of large Home and Colonial experience on two points:—

I.—What, in your opinion, is the best school for teaching a young man journalism in?

II.—What is your experience with regard to Colonial appointments?

The first question he answered as follows:

"There is no 'school of journalism' like a country newspaper in a fairly busy locality, with plenty of political life, and offering opportunities for the acquirement of intimacy with the mysteries of local government, and of experience in dealing with social functions and general work. But the 'schooling' will be all the sounder and general if it embraces a practical insight into the minutiæ of all departments—commercial, printing, and so forth. Within my personal knowledge, two gentlemen directing daily journals in the North and the West of England respectively, placed their sons in the printing, commercial, and reporting departments of their newspapers in, I think, the order named, with a view to fitting the youths for their future career as journalists."

The second question brought the following reply:

"Colonial appointments are, as a rule, fairly remunerative, but though the salaries offered may appear high when stated in sterling per annum, yet very frequently on the spot the pound is not always the exact equivalent of twenty shillings here. This is so in South Africa, the West Indies, and India, where cost of living is so much higher than at home. Some of these engagements being for a stated number of years,

carry with them free passage there and back; others, outward only.

"I cannot say I am enamoured of Colonial appointments from the point of view of experience as a means to afterwards bettering one's position on the Home press. Much could be said both for and against the idea. But if a young journalist with good grounding in newspaper work here, with no particularly close home ties, felt inclined to try the Colonies, and had a satisfactory opening before him, the chance might prove to him the tide that, taken at the flood, leads to fortune. Australia, Africa, and India have furnished many examples of this. On the other hand, the number has been legion of journalists who, after serving abroad for a greater or lesser period, have re-entered the home field only to find themselves handicapped, if not classed out-of-date, when they had fondly hoped their voluntary expatriation had been in the sacred cause of acquiring experience. I do not dare to lay down an absolute proposition, but I am fully aware that where Colonial press appointments have proved the starting-point of a distinguished career in the New World, in most cases the after position has been won in another field than that of journalism. *Au contraire,* I have known men attain position and wealth through newspaper enterprise, Colonially, who, when they went abroad, never dreamt of ever being associated with anything of the kind. They drifted into journalism, either as editors, managers, or proprietors.

"Two West Indian journalists died quite recently,

both men who had 'made their pile,' and both men who had exerted considerable influence in their respective *rôles* in the community in whose midst they had lived and worked; yet neither had had any training in journalism. One, indeed, went to the Colony as an assistant in a drapery store, and the other to a stationery and general printing establishment; but both, in course of time, left their original occupations, secured managerships of newspaper offices, and eventually established and successfully carried on their own journals. On the other hand, a young English journalist went out many years ago to the same Colony. He is now a retired Colonial judge!"

I have written mainly from the working reporter's point of view, and now I would like you to hear what a daily provincial newspaper proprietor says is expected of the modern reporter. Mr. F. G. Byles, F.J.I., of the *Yorkshire Daily Observer*, at the 1901 Conference of the Institute of Journalists, said:—

"The modern reporter must not only keep on intimate terms with the controversies of the hour, and cultivate a sense of logical fitness, he must go through the world with an imaginative eye, a sympathetic mind, and some fund of literary expression. . . . As a matter of fact, the exigencies of journalism are bringing about a division of labour in the reporter's room. Certain men having evinced special aptitude for certain classes of engagements are preferably marked for these in the diary. The staff of a modern newspaper not only includes critics in art, the theatre,

music, cricket, and football editors, golf and cycling contributors, but it will count one reporter especially serviceable for scientific, historical, and antiquarian events, another whose pen runs with notable ease and pleasantness in the description of social functions, a third who is relied upon for his knowledge of local affairs, and so forth. This specialisation is likely to go much further. . . . *The reporter of the future will have to take a high view of his calling.* He must not look forward to being a mere handicraftsman, or even a superior species of the polite letter writer; he must prepare himself by a liberal education, and keep himself alert and informed by assiduous observation of the whole world about him, and by the special study of some part of it."

I would say to every young journalist: Memorize and act up to the words: "THE REPORTER OF THE FUTURE WILL HAVE TO TAKE A HIGH VIEW OF HIS CALLING."

CHAPTER IV.

LONDON JOURNALISM.

FLEET STREET is the journalist's Mecca towards which he pilgrimages from the first hour that he adopts journalism as a profession. Young reporters are sent up from time to time on special business, and then the first place they make for is Fleet Street. For the newspaper man Fleet Street extends from *The Times* in Printing House Square to the *Pall Mall* in Charing Cross Road—formerly the circle was narrower, but now it takes in Covent Garden and the Embankment. Fleet Street is a charmed area, throbbing with newspaper life, and in it the professional journalist lives and moves and has his being.

Fleet Street is classic ground, and when a man becomes a London journalist, he forms one of a line in direct succession to Milton and Dryden, Defoe, Addison and Steele, Johnson and Swift, Lamb and Coleridge, Thackeray, Carlyle and Dickens. Almost every man of letters during the last three centuries has written for the press, and distinguished living men are proud to have been reckoned amongst successful contributors. For reasons ancient and modern the

Fleet Street atmosphere is charged with elements wanting elsewhere, and the professional journalist feels a buoyancy in it similar to that which Alpine climbers feel in high latitudes. A young man coming up from a provincial daily, with a London engagement in his pocket, experiences a sensation of elation when he walks down Fleet Street, for the first time a recognised working member of the London press.

During the last twenty years the provincial daily newspapers have taken possession of unappropriated parts of Fleet Street, and now, as in the case of the *Sheffield Telegraph*, are setting up establishments vieing with the palatial offices of the great London dailies. Representative papers of England, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales are to be found either on first or second or third floors, with big signs in front, and thin wires indicating the offices in which time and space have been annihilated between Fleet Street and the extreme North and West of newspaper enterprise. The empire is also represented by Canadian and Australian dailies, which go to the enormous expense of cabling important news direct. The telegraph wires cutting the sky-line overhead tell the man who already knows the story of to-day's journalism in Fleet Street, and one knowing the story may fancy that he hears the heart of the world beating on the vibrant wires.

The experienced reporter from the provinces will soon adapt himself to conditions which at first appear strange.

FLEET STREET REPORTERS.

There are three classes of reporters in Fleet Street, namely, the annual, the sessional and the liner.

The *Annual* is a gentleman on the staff engaged at an annual salary, and is often called on to assist in the sub-editorial department. The annual may be a gallery reporter desirous of steady work all the year round; he may come direct from the provinces, or he may be an outsider rewarded in this way for some exceptionally good work. An annual is usually a good all-round man—a good reliable note-taker especially. He may be called on to act as special correspondent, and to do descriptive work; but on most of the London dailies the various branches of newspaper work are specialised, and descriptive reporting proper is a distinct department. An annual with special knowledge has, on some papers, a capital chance of becoming a "special" only, with a liberal retaining fee and but little to do.

London newspaper offices have their own customs. In some offices the annual waits on the manager every morning for his instructions; in other offices he is supposed to remain at home until twelve o'clock in the day, and if he is not wired to or sent for the rest of the day is his own, unless he is on the Parliamentary staff, and then he knows what to do without instructions from any one. The annual is generally met at conferences, Party political meetings, drawing-room meetings, society functions, and various places where his journal thinks fit to be specially represented.

There is no hard and fast rule. The annual is at the disposal of the manager, and is supposed to have so much experience and ability as to be able to play his part wherever sent.

The Police, County, and Sheriffs' Courts are, as a rule, covered by reporters regularly attending them. Sometimes one man represents all the London morning and evening newspapers in a particular Court. He receives a salary from each paper, and the appointment is usually a good one. A man should, however, have special training for this work so as to make his morning and evening paper reports acceptable to sub-editors. It makes no difference to him if one of his papers sends a special to write up a particular case—he sends in his "flimsy" all the same. Very few vacancies occur in this line of business—sometimes the appointment descends from father to son, as in the case of Grossmith, the actor, who was trained in the old Bow Street Police Court under his father, and retained his appointment long after he became celebrated.

Men receiving salaries for court work are also said to be annuals. Mr. So-and-so is said to be an annual at Marlborough Street, but he is never expected to show his face inside a Fleet Street office. A man may be an annual for certain papers and a liner for others —that is, paid by results. The distinction in this case carries no professional inferiority with it. The work is the same whether done on "lineage" or per annum.

A *Sessional* is a parliamentary Gallery reporter. His engagement commences with the opening and

terminates with the prorogation of each Session of Parliament. By the custom of the Gallery all adjournments are paid for as working weeks, and a "Sessional" cannot be called on to render any kind of professional service to his paper when the House is not sitting. This custom has, however, not been strictly observed of late years, and some offices contract themselves out of the custom by specially prepared agreements.*

A *Liner* works on results only—a Fleet Street liner designates a class. To make a good income the liner should be well and favourably known to sub-editors. There are two classes of liners; namely, those who confine themselves to particular work: coroners' inquests, fires, trade societies, religious meetings, for example; and those who sneeze at nothing, in any place or time, that can be turned into copy. The liner is the most speculative man alive; he flimsies everything and takes his chance. Without the liner the Metropolitan press would long ago have reorganised its reporting staff and system of working. The wide-awake liner who can secure a monopoly of a particular class of news is in clover—a quarter of a column used in six papers is worth two guineas. To be a "Fleet Street liner" a man must know London thoroughly, the internal working of every Fleet Street office, and a good deal about the personal likes and dislikes of sub-editors. He must, above all things, have the journalistic instinct developed to perfection in

---

* *Post.*—Parliamentary reporting.

order to hit the popular taste at the right moment, and then to drop a subject just before the public tire. The "Fleet Street liner" is usually a brilliant man fallen on evil days, and his struggle for survival is now desperate in consequence of the methodical and business-like "services" of the news agencies. Provincial reporters do not become "Fleet Street liners" until after a long, often sad, London experience.

A liner standing well with sub-editors may make a good income out of evening and Sunday papers; but he has to be perpetually finding new sensations, because, the moment he makes a hit, the papers send off their own specials to exploit it for all it is worth. Some liners get black-listed, and notices are posted in the sub.'s rooms stating that "copy sent in by Mr. Blank is not to be used under any circumstances."

THE USE OF "FLIMSY."

"Flimsy" is the reporter's friend. In the provinces, where each paper is represented on every possible occasion, flimsy is seldom used, but in London every man writing for more than one journal uses flimsy. My earliest recollection of flimsy goes back to the 'fifties when my father purchased a "Manifold Writer" —a beautifully got up affair in Morocco leather, and printed instructions how to use it in English, French and German. Now a man puts oiled tissue paper* in one envelope and carbonised paper in another, a stylus in his pocket, and then he is ready for any

* Fine Japanese paper is preferable.

emergency if he can only find a smooth hard surface to write on. Those who use flimsy habitually carry a japanned plate for writing on. The white sheets are usually called "whites," and the carbons "blacks." Writing with a stylus is "flimsy punching." If you want a man to give you a copy of what he's about to "flimsy" you ask him to lay down a black, or to "black one" for you. Eight is a capital number to write on flimsy, but you can write sixteen or more if the paper is fine and the stylus heavy enough.

Telegraph clerks in towns where there is more than one daily paper use flimsy largely, and in London it would be practically impossible to do without it. The great London news agencies write everything on flimsy, employing different coloured paper for distinct services—for example: white for general use, green for foreign, buff for sporting. When telegraphing to several addresses in various parts of the United Kingdom, the Post Office requires six or eight copies —one for each circuit—and the news agencies keep copies of every message for their "sent-out" files.

After the news agencies, the liner best knows the blessings of flimsies. Most liners write a good flimsy hand, so as to give subs. the least possible trouble; they also write "clean copy," that is, copy with the fewest possible erasures. It is part of the liner's art to win the good graces of the sub-editor, and dirty copy is a nuisance to everyone.

"Whites" must not be kept too long, or they turn yellow, and, when made up, the top copies tear under the point of the stylus. "Blacks" will last a long

time. If you hold a new black to the light the writing is legible. The story is told of a trick played upon a late Canon of St. Paul's by a liner, who applied to him beforehand for the MS. of a special sermon he was to preach on a day of national thanksgiving. "You may copy the sermon in my library," said the Canon, "but you must leave your flimsies with me until after the sermon is preached." The reverend gentleman was anxious to guard against premature publication. The liner made up his flimsies adroitly inserting one new black in each set. When finished, the liner drew out the blacks and handed the MS. and the flimsies to the Canon, who was not a little astonished afterwards to find that his sermon was actually being sold whilst he was preaching it. The liner had re-written the sermon from the new blacks. The contents of a diplomatic note of the first importance were once secured by a clerk in the Foreign Office, who used prepared flimsies on his writing pad. In this case punishment followed the publication of the document.

When writing flimsy for the Post Office, it is as well not to exceed 150 words on a folio; the department prefer 120, but do not object to 150 words per folio, which is a convenient length, not only for the Post Office, but for the master printer, who has often to use his scissors when too many words are crowded on one slip.

If the blacks are worn the writing is indistinct, but will show up a little if placed on a sheet of ordinary white paper. Sub-editors adopt this plan, and use

a blue pencil for punctuation marks and corrections; blacklead marks show fairly well, but ink is liable to run on the oiled surface.

RECRUITING FLEET STREET.

The best introduction a young man can have to Fleet Street, is as the accredited representative of a provincial journal. Old hands know very well that unless above the average he would not be entrusted with the editorial supervision of the London office, and he has consequently no difficulty in making professional acquaintances. If the London correspondent's office is already filled, his next plan is to secure an engagement from the journal he is leaving to do London work for them, such as local bills before parliamentary committees, City meetings, etc., where his local knowledge of persons and interests will be of much value.

I have often warned young reporters against coming to London on "spec.," unless they can afford to remain in Fleet Street for some months whilst they are getting into the run of things, and making useful professional acquaintances. If they can afford to do this, the investment in time and money may turn out well. A provincial reporter (especially if married) should not come to London on a sessional engagement only, unless he can afford to meet his expenses between the Sessions of Parliament, because the sessional salary of five or six guineas a week is insufficient to maintain him for the whole year. The out of pocket expenses of the sessional man are on the higher scale,

and make a big hole in his earnings. A single-string man, unless he is an annual, should avoid London unless he has some private means. A little London experience, however, is of considerable advantage to a young provincial intending to return again to the country, and the managing editors of all the London dailies constantly receive applications from provincial managers to nominate men to fill vacancies. A young man favourably known to London managers may get a very snug appointment at home or abroad on much better terms through them than by advertising or answering advertisements. Many good things go a-begging in Fleet Street, which the young provincial may hear of by becoming a member of the Press Club, and keeping in touch with those who may be helpful to him.

When a reporter gets into the run of Fleet Street, he will find out for himself several openings for adding to his income.

The London correspondents of provincial dailies are always anxious to receive and pay for good pars. for their London letters. A young provincial should be a very good judge of the kind of par. most acceptable to country readers, and have a special knowledge of country matters, enabling him to write up something from an incident which otherwise might escape notice. The prices paid for this kind of work are not so good now as when special wires were fewer, and papers like the *Manchester Guardian* and *Scotsman* paid fancy prices for special items, and so gained reputations for early and accurate information superior to the great

London dailies. As a rule, a good readable par. with a fact in it, is worth money to the man who knows where to place it; and London letter-writers are generally glad to receive visits from young men with neat pars. in their pockets. The best introduction to a London Correspondent is an exclusive bit of information suitable for his paper.

Where to place a good par. is a part of the science of life which can be learnt by quick, intelligent observation; and when once learnt it becomes as it were an instinct to place the right thing in the right place at the right time. A want of this knowledge often makes a man appear unfortunate when, in fact, he is only stupid, and stupidity is reckoned one of the deadly sins in a young journalist in Fleet Street.

An unfailing source of income to the Fleet Street man not ranking as an annual is the News Agency. Whatever interests society, and is good enough for a news heading, is acceptable to the News Agency whose doors are never closed, and whose demands are ever increasing. The News Agency asks for facts, facts only, clothed in few words. The charm of a par. for the Agency is its nudity. The sub. must decide quickly if a par. is worth using, and the fewer words he has to wade through the better he is pleased. It pays the contributor to be brief, especially as he is paid per subject and not per word. The first man in the field gets the preference. The Fleet Street liner avoids the News Agency because their interests clash. Stale news is worthless to an agency. Next to being *stupid*, being *late* ranks among the deadly sins with a news editor.

A young man new to Fleet Street sometimes receives commissions which he cannot execute without running some risk of unpleasant consequences. A country editor, let us say, sees in the Cause List the action of Roe *v.* Doe set down for hearing before a Justice sitting in Chambers, and he wires up for a full report. Now, a reporter cannot attend Chambers and publish a line without the consent of all the parties represented, without running the risk of committal for contempt of court, and without bringing certain trouble upon the heads of the proprietor and publisher of the paper inserting the report. The same rule applies to proceedings before a specially appointed Commissioner. Before knowing better, I attended some preliminary inquiries in *re* the Emma Mine, in which Sir Albert Grant was greatly involved. The inquiry was held at the Law Institution, and my report duly appeared in the *Manchester Guardian.* The next time I attended, I was very much surprised at hearing a learned counsel draw attention to the *Guardian's* report, and then move for an order for my committal for contempt as its representative. The learned Commissioner was good enough to accept my ignorance as an excuse, and no more was heard of the matter.

I have attended and reported many important references and inquiries since, but never without the knowledge and consent of the parties. A young provincial reporter new to Fleet Street runs a few risks which an old hand would carefully avoid; but when he gets into a scrape of this kind a candid con-

fession of ignorance and prompt apology will invariably get him out of it. I have never known a reporter actually committed for "contempt" for attending chambers and references intended to be private; but I have known a man ordered to destroy his notes before leaving a private meeting of creditors, although he was duly armed with a proxy.

The reporter's Sabbath is Saturday. If he has a Saturday engagement he invariably writes out his copy on a Sunday, and he is seldom to be found in any church, *except on duty*. The late Mr. Spurgeon had misgivings about the future happiness of reporters, and sometimes specially remembered in his prayers the gentlemen in the reserved place beneath him engaged to report his sermons. The transcripts of the Tabernacle sermons were, however, under the contract, ready for the printer at midnight every Sunday.

LONDON MORNINGS.

The staff of a London daily consists of a manager, sometimes styled managing editor; literary editor, often known as night editor; assistant editor, and sub-editors, for home and foreign news and sports. The commercial editor has his office in the City, is responsible for company business and financial reporting, and is rarely seen in Fleet Street on duty. The number of sub-editors varies in different offices, but the more copy is written up, or written down, and summarised, the more sub-editors are needed to do the work. The number of annual reporters is com-

paratively few. Each paper has an unknown number of literary men attached to it, some of whom are paid "retaining fees," entitling editors to first call upon their services, and journalism offers yearly more employment for literary talent as the rage for specialised knowledge increases. Literary specialists are but little known to working journalists outside the editorial rooms.

The young provincial who dreams of one day being the editor of *The Times* with a salary of £2,000 a year, must prepare himself for hard work. The late Mr. Delane, who was *The Times* editor when I came to London, was seldom absent from Printing House Square for thirty-six years. Mr. Charles Pebody in "English Journalism," says that Mr. Delane lived in chambers overlooking the Temple Gardens, only a short distance from *The Times* office, where "he was to be found in his room at ten o'clock at night until three or four in the morning, and with the exception of a canter in the Park for a chat with those whom he happened to meet there—a Cabinet Minister, an ambassador, a man of letters, a bishop, a Leader of the Opposition—all the rest of his day was spent in preparation for the work of the night, at his club, in the Lobby of the House of Commons, or in the society of men whose minds and wills guided senates and controlled cabinets."

I only remember seeing John Delane once, and that was when George Grote, the historian of Greece, was interred in Westminster Abbey. He was then a man over fifty, still bright-eyed and florid, but with the

lines of the thinker on cheek and forehead. Kinglake, the brilliant historian of the Crimean War, says that Delane had "the outward composure, the air of power not yet put forth, that becomes a strong man of action; but it always could be seen that his energies were rather compressed than lulled—that the furnace, if so one may speak, had its fires banked up in the day-time, yet still always aglow, always ready to blaze into action an hour or two before midnight." As it was then, so it is now, the intense life which eats into the souls of men must be lived by the responsible editors of great morning papers.

LONDON EVENINGS.

In the history of the newspaper press the morning is the offspring of the weekly, and the evening is the offspring of the morning newspaper. The difference between evening papers is settled by price. The penny is more literary than the halfpenny.

The staff appointments on an evening paper are mainly editorial, and the reporting department of an up-to-date evening is under the management of a "news editor," who favours descriptive reports, and short, smart, spicy paragraphs. The halfpenny evenings are fondest of a display of headlines, and smart, sketchy matter, personal, but not libellous; and a provincial reporter wants toning himself in Fleet Street before he is able to write just the thing needed. I will give an incident by way of illustrating actual life in an evening paper office.

Lord Blank married Miss Dash of music-hall fame.

The news editor of an up-to-date evening caught sound of it and rushed into Fleet Street without his hat. In a few seconds a hansom was bowling towards Portland Place, and the news editor returned to his room. The "special" drove back radiant, and wrote up his copy with charming frankness.

"I quite expected to be fired out," he wrote. "His Lordship had only just returned from church, and was in splendid spirits—tuberose in his coat and lavender bags. He invited me to drink the health of the bride in a glass of fiz. 'Don't get married every day, old chappie,' said his Lordship. Then in reply to my question he said, 'I'm married, special license and all that, and we're off to the States, where Lady Blank will keep her engagements.'"

Then followed all that could be picked up hastily about the bride's dresses and travelling costumes, and biographical tit-bits about the newly-married, and so the evening paper scored and came out first with a whole column of the latest society sensation, through the energy of the news editor and his luck in putting his hand at the right moment on the man who made up his mind to be "fired out," and did not care so long as he could make copy. This is the kind of man wanted on up-to-date evenings.

The *Globe* keeps up the time-honoured custom of sending its own reporter to important events; but, as a rule, the evenings rely upon liners and news agencies for reports and pars. of events of general interest. From the agencies the evenings now obtain a direct telegraphic news supply over column printer machines.

Several of these machines are in each office, and every item of news is electrically printed on rolls of paper which the sub-editor can tear off, punctuate, and send direct to the case room. These instruments are now the life and soul of evening papers racing against each other to be first in the streets with results. These instruments are even placed in machine rooms, so that the result of a race or an election may be worked off with the least possible delay. Take for example, the result of the University Boat Race.

The stereo formes are on the machine with these two lines in caps:—

CAMBRIDGE WON.

OXFORD WON.

If Cambridge wins, the moment the column printer instrument prints the letter C, the news editor standing by the machine sings out, "Cambridge wins!" The line "Oxford Won" is cut out of the soft metal with one blow, the lever is touched, the cylinder moves, and whilst the people at Mortlake are still shouting, the boys in Fleet Street are selling the result! Details follow in the next edition.

LAW COURTS REPORTING.

Newspaper men may live a whole life-time in Fleet Street without ever seeing professionally the inside of the High Courts of Justice, the reason being that they are not wanted there.

The work at the Law Courts is done by the re-

porters for the Authorised Law Reports, barristers by profession, whose reports are bound in volumes and form the valuable body of "Case Law;" by newspaper reporters, and by shorthand writers who take notes for the parties to actions. The Authorised law reporter does not undertake newspaper work. The High Court Judges revise proofs of their own judgments, and the "authorised" report is to all intents and purposes perfect.

The newspaper reporter is sometimes a barrister. The only London paper which is specially represented in each of the High Courts is *The Times*. *The Times* men are barristers and take a very good shorthand note, especially the Gallery men. The other London mornings are supplied with "flimsy" reports by a society of reporters, under the direction of Mr. Charles Scott, barrister-at-law, and an old Parliamentary Gallery reporter. The London evenings are principally supplied by the News Agencies having special Law Court staffs.* Some of the London evenings are specially represented in the Divorce Court by sketch reporters and lightning artists. The accommodation for press reporters is exceedingly limited, and when a *cause célèbre* is being tried special arrangements are made for seating additional reporters amongst the barristers. Lightning artists are independent of seats, and dodge about from place to place where they can get the best light, or best point from

---

* The provincial newspapers and class papers in London are for the most part supplied by the News Agencies.

which to sketch judge and jury and all the principal witnesses. Mr. Harry Furniss and Mr. F. C. Gould were at one time frequent visitors at the Law Courts.

Reporters not actually engaged are seldom seen in the building. When a man takes up law reporting he rarely quits it, so vacancies on the Court staffs are infrequent. In the majority of cases the High Court reporter has also a Sessional engagement, and the two engagements work together very well. In Parliament the reporter is present at the making and amending of the laws of the Realm, and in the High Court he is present when the judges of the land interpret and administer them.

The High Court reporter who is also a Sessional, works nine months in the year. When Parliament is sitting his day's work is from half-past ten in the morning until midnight—the average duration of Parliament is about twenty-six weeks. When Parliament is not sitting, his day's work is from half-past ten until four. With these "two strings to his bow," a professional man can make a sufficient income for the year.

The High Court reporter must be in his place at half-past ten because the sitting of the Court is the time for surprises. If a man is not able to be present he takes care to be "covered." When the Court re-assembles after luncheon is another time to look out for the unexpected. A barrister has to be very wide-awake now-a-day to be able to make an application of public interest in open Court without a reporter being present to take a note of it.

The Law Court men write as little shorthand as they conveniently can. Fly-notes answer the purpose for counsels' speeches, judges' observations, forensic wit, and very important questions and answers. The rest is longhanded. The late W. F. Finlason, of *The Times*, longhanded about seven columns a day of the famous Tichborne Claimant trial before Lord Chief Justice Cockburn at Westminster.* It is very good work to turn out three columns of a trial whilst the Court sits; and very few cases will stand longer reports without wearying the reader with repetitions. A good question and answer report may be longhanded without difficulty.

The News Agencies have private rooms in the crypts for the writing out and despatch of messages to newspapers. These rooms are electrically connected with the head offices, so within a few seconds

* A more wonderful performance of longhand reporting is narrated by Mr. Frederick Wicks in a letter to *The Times* after Mr. Finlason's decease. Mr. Wicks wrote: "The extreme rapidity with which Mr. Finlason transcribed his notes was strikingly illustrated in the case of his report of the charge by Lord Chief Justice Cockburn in the Eyre case. The speech occupied the entire day, and the report filled a page of *The Times*, yet it was on the printer's desk at six o'clock. As a member of your Parliamentary staff at the time, I was so struck with the performance that I was curious to ascertain how it could be done, and imagined Mr. Finlason had been assisted. I found that he had written the report in longhand as the speech was made, and dropped into marginal shorthand notes wherever a passage of unusual importance occurred. These marginal notes he transcribed in the brief space of time that elapsed from the rising of the Court until he handed in the report." See observations on longhand reporting in previous chapters.

of a verdict being given, or judgment pronounced, the result is recorded by column printer instruments in newspaper offices and West End clubs.

Lady reporters have, from time to time, invaded the Law Courts, but the work not being to their liking, they have usually disappeared. There being no opposition to their presence, there was little inducement for them to remain. Ladies accustomed to descriptive work might be employed at trials when popular actresses and "Society" ladies are present, because the average "mere man" reporter is at sea when describing costumes, and hopelessly gone on colours and chiffons. This class of case is comparatively rare, and, at present, there is little encouragement for the lady journalist to spend her time in the High Courts.

Law Court reports give the least possible trouble to managing editors who rely on getting daily every case of general public interest reported at such length as it is worth. If, for any reason, a special report is wanted, the editor has only to send a note to the Court, or, as is sometimes done, despatch a staff man to watch for and take a note of particular points, and elaborate the ordinary report when it comes in. A London reporter may see the inside of the High Courts a few times in his life, but as a rule he passes to and fro without ever putting his foot on the tessellated pavement of the Gothic Hall.

When the shorthand writer is not at work, he is to be met in the lobbies of the Courts with a notebook under his arm. Shorthand writing is a pro-

fession by itself, and quite distinct from newspaper reporting.*

The new Bankruptcy Courts adjoin the High Courts, but a Common Law or Equity reporter would as soon think of flying as of crossing the road and reporting bankruptcy proceedings. When bankruptcy appeals are heard "over the way," the Common Law man gives up possession. The work in bankruptcy is carried on as in the High Courts by reporters and shorthand writers, the latter, however, being officially appointed, which, in the High Courts, with two exceptions, they are not.

Personal friendships often spring up between newspaper reporters and members of the bar, which are not laid aside when the barrister becomes an "eminent silk," and, later on, receives the congratulations of his old friends on his "elevation to the Bench."

There are several very good, concise dictionaries of law terms published. Mozley and Whitley's is well spoken of.

INTERVIEWING.

English newspaper men look upon interviewing with disfavour. When sent to interview a man, the average reporter is profoundly relieved to find him "not at home." Usually the interviewer and his art are denied any proper place in English journalism. The general opinion about interviewing is that it is a branch of modern journalistic work best left to men

---

* See section "The Shorthand Writer."

having a special liking for it.* Our American brethren, on the other hand, have a fondness for interviewing and every reporter tries to excel as a smart interviewer.

Three reasons for our journalists' dislike to interviewing are:—

I.—The practice is an imported one. Born in Paris, adopted by America, the art found its way as an emigrant to England.

II.—An inbred dislike to put inquisitorial questions.

III.—Dread of being snubbed.

Even when the interviewed is not over-sensitive himself, he finds much difficulty in breaking down his racial reserve when asked by strangers, note-book in hand and panting for information, to talk about his own affairs, experiences and opinions. There are a few well-known professional interviewers connected with the Metropolitan press, but they do not assimilate well with Fleet Street.

Interviewing, in fact, is one of the pleasantest things in life if the interviewed is only agreeable. The best plan is to see your man by appointment, for then he gives no trouble. He has prepared what he wishes

---

* The author of "How to Write for the Press" (p. 54) thinks that the prejudice against interviewing is owing to the unfitness of reporters for the work. He says: "The qualifications of the clever interviewer are no ordinary endowments. One might search the whole staff of many a leading newspaper, and not find a single member thoroughly equipped for the work." Office inquiries and interviewing must not be confounded.

to say, and probably rehearsed in private how best to say it. The art of the interviewer in such a case is to induce the interviewed to go beyond what he intended, and take the public into his confidence on some matter of real interest at the moment. It is the interviewer's art to surprise him into confidences, and the best way to do so is to keep your note-book out of sight. My own practice has been only to take a few notes of the heads of conversation, and to write out the interview as soon as over. It is vain to set a snare in the sight of any bird; and even when the interviewed has no objection to all he says being published, his views will be given in more popular language and with less restraint if you are not taking shorthand notes in his face. The conversations appear more natural and make better copy if written mainly from memory. Again, when conversing with any one you understand his meaning so much better, and so many more suggestions arise to your tongue, if you note his expression instead of keeping your eyes fixed upon your note-book. Sometimes the interviewed will ask you to take a note of certain portions of the conversation, and read it over to him afterwards, so that no mistake may occur. If you are asked to suppress any part of the conversation you are bound in honour to do so.

Sometimes there is no time for making an appointment. An interview is often wanted immediately on some subject of importance. Usually it is a statesman or public man whose views are wanted in a hurry, and then the interviewer must take his chance; but the

experienced hand, in this as in other cases, gets the best results.

Sometimes an interview with a reporter is sought for. During Mr. Parnell's rule I was sent over to Ireland to write descriptions of eviction scenes, and the progress of the "Siege of Tim Quinlan's Castle," which somehow had tickled the public fancy. One morning Dr. Croke, Archbishop of Cashel, seeing a stranger taking notes on the platform from which he was speaking, sent for me. His Grace soon gave me to understand that he wished to be interviewed. He was a strong pillar of the Irish Nationalist movement, and wished me to understand that what I saw on the surface was but the fevered symptoms of a disease which could be administered to successfully only by Irish hands consecrated by the Roman Church. Vivacious and sparkling, the Archbishop, a polished man of the world, gave me a column of splendid copy which I used on the first day that eviction scenes were dull. So timely an unsolicited interview seldom falls to one's lot.

Interview by introduction is, I think, the most pleasant, and in many respects even preferable to an interview by appointment. I ran down to Oxford one day to obtain some special information from Dr. Max Müller, and he gave me a card of introduction to Sir Frederick Abel, who alone could give me certain details. Within a few minutes of my arrival at the Imperial Institute, I was with Sir Frederick. The Oxford Professor's card was the "open sesame." Under ordinary circum-

stances I might have waited a long time, or have been told to call again.

Sometimes an interview can only be obtained under conditions. I was despatched in haste one morning to the residence of a Cabinet Minister, who was reported to have developed strong views in opposition to Mr. Gladstone's Irish Home Rule policy. The right hon. gentleman received me.

"You wish to interview me," said he, "on Mr. Gladstone's Home Rule pronouncements. Well, I refuse to be interviewed. But (and here he paused, and looked straight at me) you can have my opinions and publish them, *provided you do not give my name.*"

I gave the undertaking and had my interview, which was robbed of much of its newspaper value because I could not give the name of my authority. The right hon. gentleman subsequently avowed his opinions in a letter to *The Times*, and was ever after friendly towards me when I sought his assistance at Westminster. To all young reporters I would say: When you obtain an interview under conditions, keep faith, whatever the consequences.

Commissions to interview people are not always of the most agreeable kind. I was leaving the House of Lords' Gallery one evening, when a message was brought to me to the effect that a well-known commercial man in the West End was rumoured to have "suicided," and I was requested to make inquiries. Certain circumstances pointed to a sufficient motive for self-sacrifice, and I was somewhat nonplussed at seeing the gentleman in his counting-house. Probably

I surprised him when I told him my errand and the rumour about himself occasioning it; at all events, he chatted freely and made good copy.

I only remember receiving one commission to interview which might have terminated unpleasantly to me. The gentleman was an American visitor, whose wife had been presented to Queen Victoria at the previous Drawing-room. For some reason the lady's name was afterwards expunged from the official list, and the fact was duly announced in the *London Gazette*. The Editor of the *Central News Agency* wishing to cable to New York, requested me to interview the lady's husband and get from him such explanation as he chose to give for the benefit of American society. The gentleman was at dinner, but did not keep me waiting. His knowledge of reporters' habits in America probably enabled him to divine my errand, at all events, he was not pleasant to look at when he came to me. Evidently he was still smarting. I opened my mission tactfully, and tried to show the gentleman that my editor was doing him a good turn in giving him an early opportunity of getting his statement published in New York, side by side with the awkward paragraph in the *Gazette* inserted by the Queen's command. The gentleman retired for a few minutes and then returned with a blank refusal to say one single word. He was a tall, powerful man under irritation, and I was prudent. Presently he offered me a cigar and we talked of other things, and before I left he informed me that he had made up his mind to kick out of the house any man who came to interview him on this unpleasant topic.

"If I had been less fortunate in my manner in opening my delicate mission, what would have happened?" I asked.

"I should have kept my word right there," he replied.

I had no reason to doubt him. I have been denied the information I sought, and sometimes I have been unable to see my man alone; but this is the only occasion that the suspicion of unpleasant personal consequences was ever forced upon me.

The editor usually selects a man of "good address," with pleasant and sufficiently earnest manner, for interviewing. Over-earnestness is bad as it awakens suspicion; people often place an exaggerated value on information which some one is over eager to get. I only know two good working rules:—

I.—The interviewer should have a clear notion of what he wants, and sufficient knowledge of the subject to be able to make the most of new and unexpected openings. In other words, he should understand the art of conversation.

II.—He should be able to converse freely in novel situations. Alma-Tadema, the famous classic painter, told me that he was on one occasion called on by a gentleman from Fleet Street who was unable to ask him a single question whilst he went on painting. "I can work and talk too," said the artist, "and conversation would not disturb my model. I could not afford the time to take my visitor into a private room, and eventually he went away. I was sorry for him," added the genial artist, "but he evidently was the wrong man for the occasion."

A working journalist classifies interviews under the following heads: Conversational, argumentative, interrogative, one-sided, descriptive. He, however, recommends as the most effective "a blend of several." * I would say that the interviewer must be guided by circumstances—the subject-matter of the interview, the time and place of the interview, and the character and position of the person interviewed. Another very important consideration is the *tone* of the journal for which the interview is to be written.

Provincial reporters often miss excellent opportunities for interviewing men and women of the hour because they do not cultivate the pleasing art of conversation with strangers. There is always a market for good interviews with persons of note, and the young reporter may greatly add to his income and experience whilst qualifying for a superior position on the press.

Mr. Arthur Lynch, writing on the "Status of Journalism," in the *Outlook* (New York), for August, 1901, says:—

"Among hundreds of incidents which I could cite, I select that of a Paris correspondent of my acquaintance, who, at a moment of considerable political tension, received a cable from his editor in New York, 'Interview Delcassé on Situation.'

"He showed me the telegram, and the following conversation ensued:—

"'Do you think I could get an interview from Delcassé?'

* "How to Write for the Press." By an Editor. p. 55.

"'No.'

"'Could you get an interview from Delcassé?'

"'No.'

"'Could any one in Paris get an interview from Delcassé just now?'

"'No.'

"'Very well! I will go home and write the thing myself.'

"And he did."

An English journalist known to manufacture interviews to order, would be at once dismissed. I cite the above as a good example of, How *not* to do it.

THE WAR CORRESPONDENT.

The young journalist, when learning his business on a weekly, may lay the foundations for future fame by becoming a Volunteer. After he has gone through his drill and mastered his Instruction book, he will have so far qualified himself for the position of war correspondent, should he ever be offered that position. To represent an influential daily or News Agency at the seat of war during a campaign, is the most certain way that I know of for acquiring immediate and, if deserved, permanent reputation. The young man who does credit to his journal abroad is put on the staff when he returns, and receives a comfortable retaining fee for doing little besides waiting for the next war to break out.

In the history of the press, the war correspondent is a new creation. *The Morning Post* was represented in Spain by Charles Gruneisen, in 1835, and the *Morn-*

ing Chronicle, at the Siege of Rome, in 1848; but the real founder of the line was taken out of the House of Commons' Gallery, and despatched to the Crimea. W. H. Russell was a "Sessional" man on *The Times*, and no one was more surprised than he, when he was selected by Printing House Square to pack up his kit and follow Lord Raglan. The appointment which turned out so brilliantly was a "fluke"—the gentleman who had been appointed to the post was taken ill at the last moment, and Dr. (then Mr.) Russell was despatched. The young reporter should be always ready, for he never knows when his chance is coming. Modern campaigns have made the literary fortunes of many men. The Franco-Prussian War brought Archibald Forbes to the front; the Soudan, Bennet Burleigh; the Boer War, Winston Churchill. Of the four representative men here mentioned, two were working journalists—Russell and Burleigh.

My friend, Mr. Cunnington, who was Burleigh's colleague during the first Soudan campaign, has favoured me with some practical though humorous observations.

"The war correspondent," he says, "must have the following qualifications: In the first place, *cheek*, not impudence (there is a vast difference between the two). He must have a good constitution, be able to rough it, sleep in the open, and live on broken biscuits and bully or tinned beef. He must also have ability to grasp the situation at once, and some (the more the better) military experience. The field days at Aldershot have afforded splendid training to the war correspondents now in South Africa.

"As to a war correspondent's outfit, Mr. Burleigh says a tooth brush, a piece of soap, pencil and paper, plenty of ready money and a revolver, are all that is absolutely required. My experience, however, taught me that an overcoat, a change of socks and linen are really necessaries, but, undoubtedly, the less personal luggage the war correspondent has, the easier it is for him to move at a minute's notice.

"Before starting, the war correspondent provides himself with a passport, which may be useful in case of emergency. He has, of course, to obtain a War Office authority to accompany the troops wherever they may go.

"As soon as the war correspondent arrives at the front he is under military law, and is responsible to the commanding officer of the camp to which he is attached for all his actions. As regards *food*, he draws his rations daily from the military commissariat department, and is charged a small sum for them.

"His first duty is to make friends with the telegraph operators, if there is a telegraph station in the camp. There are several ways of forming friendships and then cementing them, and the correspondent must find out the best way for himself if he is going to startle the world one day by getting his 'important events' messages through first. Seconds are often of the utmost consequence to 'Our Own Special,' and if he does not learn this fact, and learn it quickly, he'll never be worth his salt on an enterprising journal.

"The war correspondent will also make the ac-

quaintance, as far as possible, of all the officers stationed at the camp, he will learn the regiments and study their uniforms and other characteristics, and should he be during an engagement some considerable distance from the fighting, he will be able to identify the troops. He will also endeavour to obtain an inkling of the plan of campaign, and though his labour is often in vain, the general officers, as a rule, do everything they can to help the 'Special.'

"Even before the first shot is fired by the enemy —presuming, of course, that there is to be an attack— the war correspondent must be out surveying the country and locating the outposts of the enemy. He will then take up the best position for seeing with the aid of field glasses the advance forces of the enemy and of our own troops leaving camp, their order and disposition. Having rightly estimated the respective strength of opposing forces the 'Special' will despatch his attendant in hot haste with brief message to telegraph office. For example:

> Ladysmith, 9 a.m. Enemy commenced attack 8.50. Two regiments with four guns coming down hill. We are sending out the First Manchester and the Second Northampton, with one battery of artillery.

"If the Press Censor does not interfere, this message is instantly despatched.

"The war correspondent will then attach himself to some particular regiment and follow its destinies to the end of the day, availing himself, however, of every opportunity of forwarding messages to the tele-

graph offices in camp. At night, or after the engagement is over, the correspondent will sit down in his tent (provided he has one) and write a detailed account of the day's work—half a column, three-quarters of a column, or a column, according to circumstances, which will be cabled when the wires are at 'rest.' Very long and detailed descriptions may be written afterwards, and mailed. A knowledge of drawing and the use of the camera are most useful to the descriptive war special.

"A war correspondent runs as much (if not more) risk as the soldier. If he does his duty to his journal, it is absolutely necessary that he should expose himself to considerable risk.* He must place himself in such a position that he can see the fighting, and he must also follow it up. Not infrequently correspondents are captured by the enemy and treated as prisoners of war.

"It is most desirable that a war special should be able to do his own cooking, when he has anything

* When the square was broken at Omdurman, Bennet Burleigh rendered himself so conspicuous by his gallantry that Lord Wolseley made honourable mention of him in his despatches, which was the first instance of a war correspondent being so recognised. Cameron, of the *Standard*, was shot dead whilst eating a meal before the commencement of a fight in the Soudan, which was also the grave of the brilliant Edward O'Donovan, who perished with Hicks Pasha's unfortunate army. Joseph Dunn, of the Central News Agency, endured the horrors and privations of the Siege of Ladysmith with the uncomplaining fortitude of a brave man, and was honoured as such after death. Mr. Dunn was a working journalist. The Crypt of St. Paul's has become the War Correspondent's Valhalla.

to cook, and be blessed with a good digestion. If he can call sleep to his eyelids at any moment, so much the better. As for nerves, he should not know that he possesses any."

THE SHORTHAND WRITER.

Shorthand writing as a profession is distinct from Journalism. A shorthand writer may be, and sometimes is, a good newspaper reporter; but a shorthand writer in good practice seldom does newspaper work.

The professional shorthand writer's business mainly consists in taking oral evidence in the Law Courts, before parliamentary committees, Royal and other commissions, inquiries, arbitrations, etc. In London, Edinburgh and Dublin, and in a few large business centres the professional shorthand writer flourishes. He is often sent abroad to take evidence on commission.

In provincial towns where proceedings in bankruptcy are taken before Registrars, newspaper reporters are usually appointed to take shorthand notes of the evidence to be put on the Court files. This is a lucrative appointment, and, in order to prevent jealousy, the work is usually divided. Newspaper reporters also are engaged occasionally to take shorthand notes for solicitors. For instance, solicitors often desire to have a note taken of evidence at Coroners' inquests in the interest of some insurance office. None but an expert shorthand writer can be trusted to take oral evidence which is hereafter to be relied on in judicial or other proceedings, and only an expert will under-

take it when he knows that he may be required to swear an affidavit as to the accuracy of his transcript, which cannot be right if his note is defective.

Newspaper reporters do not, as a rule, undertake note-taking, except on occasion, because it interferes with their office duties, and because they are not good at dictation. The reporter accustomed to write out his own notes is slow when reading to dictatees, and unless he can read accurately and well he cannot get his transcript ready in time.

In London a professional shorthand writer is a member of the Shorthand Writers' Institute, established in 1882. This Institute gives diplomas and certificates to qualified members, and now possesses a valuable reference library.

A shorthand-writing firm will take articled pupils for five years at a moderate premium. When the pupil is advanced in his studies he is sent into the Law Courts, or elsewhere, to practise, and is employed about the office taking dictation, copying or making up transcripts, counting folios and learning his business generally. Later on he is sent out with a qualified assistant to take notes, and, later still, is entrusted to take notes for the firm. When out of his time he will probably be retained by his firm as an assistant.

In order to become a member of the Shorthand Writers' Institute the young assistant must pass an educational examination, which is satisfied by the certificate of (1) the College of Preceptors, (2) the Oxford or Cambridge Local (Junior) Examination,

(3) the Incorporated Law Society, or (4) an examination prescribed by the Institute and conducted by the members of the Council, which includes Latin and mathematics.

A professional shorthand writer's success depends upon the accuracy of his note, and his ability to read it not less fluently than printed matter to dictatees. A slow and hesitating dictator is of little service when a transcript is wanted immediately.

I have often admired the apparent ease with which a professional shorthand writer taking notes, for instance, in the Court of Appeal, gets down on his book a rapid cross-fire of question and answer between three judges and learned counsel on opposite sides. The note-taker bends a little closer over his book, thus showing the strain upon his powers, but never lifts his head, knowing, as he does, the voice of each speaker. A knowledge of voices is of the first importance whenever a lively discussion is going on on a point which may be vital to the issue, and this knowledge is only slowly acquired.

A fair day's note-taking averages five hundred folios, 36,000 words, or eighteen ordinary newspaper columns. When the shorthand writer returns to his office, dictatees are awaiting him.

Dictatees are expert shorthand writers, and amongst them are found men engaged in public offices, barristers' clerks, and others who are prepared to work until the small hours of the morning when necessary. Dictatees, law stationers and printers are invariably snuff-takers. This is one of the signs by which you may know them.

The shorthand writer who has been note-taking all the day, commences dictating as soon as possible after five o'clock, and as he reads his notes almost as rapidly as he wrote them, his work is generally finished and revised soon after midnight. If a second copy is wanted the transcript is sent as revised to the law stationers, and both transcript and copy are ready for delivery early the next morning.

The shorthand writer must always be prepared to finish his day's work before going home. Some men write so beautifully that their assistants can do the dictation for them. The writer has fresh note-books brought to him twice in the course of the day, and when he returns to his office one-half of the dictation work is done, and he may only be required to look at one or two query marks. Pupils often declare that they can read their master's notes better than their own. Gurney's, Taylor's, and Pitman's are the three systems principally used by shorthand writers, but the latter is gradually displacing the older and simpler systems.

In London most of the shorthand writers' business comes through solicitors, and it is professional to speak of a solicitor as "my client." Shorthand writers travel on circuit when the judges go on Assize, and country solicitors can rely on having notes taken for them by the firm which they employ in London through their professional agents.

The transcript of a full day's note-taking costs the client about £20, a second copy is rendered at half price.

The dictatee who can take and transcribe one

hundred folios in a night earns 16s. 8d. During the busy months of the year, a good, reliable man can calculate on earning £3 a week, a nice addition to a gentleman in a public office at liberty after five o'clock.

The shorthand writer is often engaged by the Government to take notes in inquiries affecting the personal reputation and character of high officials, departmental business and State affairs. He is also often called on to take evidence in cases heard *in camera* and before referees at times when reporters are not admitted. It is usual in such cases to swear the note-taker to secrecy. This is an almost unnecessary precaution, there being an honourable understanding in shorthand writers' offices that nothing is to be divulged to the prejudice of a client, and dictatees, as a rule, are as discreet as their employers. The shorthand writer is often sent abroad to take evidence before commissioners, dictatees accompanying him when copies of the evidence are wanted day by day, as in the South African inquiry into the state of the Hospitals. This class of business is profitable, and leaves pleasant memories.

In conversation the professional shorthand writer can at once be detected from the newspaper reporter. If you ask the former how much such-and-such a case will make, he replies in "folios," 100, 200, 500 folios, according to his estimate; if you ask the same question of the latter he replies in columns, one, two, three columns. A shorthand writer "pages" his transcript, whilst a reporter "folios" his copy. When you understand what is meant by "folio," the estimate

of length is soon made—thirty shorthand writer's folios go to a reporter's column of minion. A shorthand writer's note-book is made of good paper, is numbered, paged and indexed for future reference. A reporter's note-book is usually made of slips of copy paper pinned in the middle and doubled over—a veritable puzzle to every one but the owner—and pitched into the nearest waste paper basket when no longer wanted.

As a profession shorthand writing is more profitable than newspaper reporting. The shorthand writer can engage assistants, but the reporter (with exceptions) must turn out his own copy.

For the history of shorthand and the battle of the "systems," read "History of Shorthand Writing," by Matthias Levy, and "History of Shorthand," by Thomas Anderson.

THE GALLERY MAN.

The ambition of every young reporter is to become a member of a parliamentary corps at Westminster. To be a member of the Gallery is to wear the blue riband of the craft. The traditions of the Gallery are founded in great names:* in Edward Cave, founder of the *Gentleman's Magazine*, in Samuel Johnson, in Charles Dickens, in Lord Chief Justice Russell of Killowen. There are eminent men still living who

* John Jewel, afterwards Bishop of Salisbury, reported a three days' debate in the House of Lords in December, 1548. Mr. George Walpole in his lecture, "Some Old Parliamentary Hands," gives a specimen of his work.

have passed through the Gallery: great lawyers like Sir Edward Clarke; successful authors like David Christie Murray; successful journalists like Henry Lucy, William Senior, and Edward Peacock; well-known Members of Parliament like T. P. O'Connor and H. E. Duke, and war correspondents who have distinguished themselves in the Soudan, Madagascar, and South Africa. In every editorial room in London the Galleryman is to be found.

The members of the Gallery are picked men engaged either on the corps of a London daily, a News Agency, the Hansard corps, or who have been sent up from the provinces to represent their respective journals in Parliament.

Every member of the Gallery receives a Sessional "non-transferable" ticket, signed by the Sergeant-at-Arms, for the House of Commons, and another ticket for the House of Lords, signed by the Lord Chamberlain.*

The House of Commons ticket is made out in the name of the holder, who thus acquires a certain property in his appointment and privileges, together with an official recognition of his existence which is peculiar to Westminster. The member of a Parliamentary corps is a member of Parliament above the floor, where he acts as a recorder for the public, and is only removable during a Session by the Sergeant-at-Arms cancelling his ticket—a very rare occurrence.

* A few Sessional tickets are also issued to leader writers and artists. Some of the high-class weeklies are favoured with a one night a week ticket.

The Reporters' Gallery is under the charge of House officials, who possess lists of all the gentlemen of the Press entitled to enter its exclusive precincts. The practice is to produce your ticket on the first night of a Session. With old members this is purely a matter of form.

Formerly the Sessional ticket issued by the Sergeant-at-Arms covered both Houses, but after the dynamite outrage in Westminster Hall, a separate ticket was issued for the Lords. The Reporters' Gallery in the Upper is under the charge of officials the same as in the Lower House. No breaches of decorum are tolerated in either place.

The largest parliamentary corps is that of *The Times*, which numbers sixteen. An average corps is eight, including the Chief, who writes the Summary. The Chief is responsible for the corps and his word is law. The man who argues with his Chief soon disappears from this sphere of influence. The Chief is in touch with his office in Fleet Street, and directs whose speeches shall be written in the first, and whose in the third person. He goes into the Lobby occasionally to interview Ministers, and his position demands watchfulness, judgment and tact.

The Reporters' Gallery in the House of Commons is above the Speaker's Chair, the best place in the House for hearing, as every Hon. and Rt. Hon. Member addresses himself to Mr. Speaker. It is also a good place for noting any incident or "scene." In the Upper Chamber the Gallery faces the Woolsack on which the Lord Chancellor (who is the Speaker of the

House) sits; but noble lords who wish to be reported must often turn a shoulder to the Lord Chancellor, and speak to the reporters. Speeches are, as a rule, better heard in the Commons than in the Lords.

The members of a corps follow each other in rotation. A fresh "turn" list is made out every week, thus each member gets his fair share of early, late and question turns. The rule is to commence with half-hour turns, shorten them to quarters after eight, and further reduce them to ten or five minutes if important speakers get up late. "Turns" lengthen and shorten to meet emergencies.

To avoid any possible confusion in folioing copy each reporter writes his name in the left-hand corner of his first slip, and the name of the gentleman who follows him at the end of his turn, thus: Smith follows Brown.* If a man has nothing to write after he comes off he writes the word "*Nil*" on his slip, and the name of his relief, that is the man who follows. "Relief" is the technical Gallery word. A man says: "I *relieve* Smith at seven, and my *relief* is Jones." The man who has nothing to write is said to have a "nil turn." Nil turns are not uncommon in the committee stages of Bills, but the reporter remains in his box during his turn, for a breeze may

* A curiosity in newspaper blunders once occurred through this practice. Mr. Disraeli was speaking, and the reporter's turn ended with the words: "Then, Sir, what follows?" The report appeared: "Then, Sir, what follows? Green follows Robson."

spring up at any moment, and a breeze is as the breath of life on a dull night.

With few exceptions the provincial daily newspapers are supplied with parliamentary reports by the *Press Association* and the *Central News* Agencies, and in order that their reports may be put on the wires with the least possible delay, pneumatic tubes run from the back of the Gallery to the telegraph office. Each News Agency has its own corps, descriptive writers and Lobbyists.

The "Lobbyist" is peculiar to parliamentary work. Sometimes he is an old parliamentary hand, tactful, full of expedient and resource, well up in the politics of the day, and with an intuitive knowledge of character enabling him to tickle the vanity of some and get on the blind side of other hon. gentlemen; sometimes he has little but the audacity of youth to support him, and he gets along with this until he can develop the more sterling qualities necessary for permanent success.

A large proportion of Sessional men are barristers and reporters in the High Courts. Nearly all have a second engagement, and the majority do a fair day's work before their Gallery work begins. Engagements on a parliamentary corps are, as already stated, sessional, and as a rule are made by the Chief. In many cases the Chief re-engages his men for the next Session before the prorogation, in other cases re-engagements are postponed until the beginning of the Session. Men like to go away for their holidays with their next year's engagements in their pockets.

Any man who has reason to think he will not be wanted again is generally put out of suspense at an early date. No one complains if, at the end of a Session, a man leaves one corps and joins another. Vacancies, except through death, retirement, or promotion, seldom occur in the Gallery. A provincial reporter anxious to get on a London corps should be well introduced to its Chief, and obtain the promise of an offer of the next vacancy. If he is in London during a Session and can get called on for extra nights—such as the Budget night, or when there is a full-dress debate in both Houses—he stands a good chance of getting a Sessional ticket.

A Gallery Sessional reporter is free from all office engagements, but, if wanted, it is understood that the office has the first call on his services, which, being extra, are paid for at the professional rate. This is a "custom of the Gallery," but a man may contract himself out of the custom, and many now do.

The accommodation for the members of the Gallery was originally very limited, and men used to return to their offices to write out their copy. The smoking-room of the old Red Lion, in Parliament Street, was a favourite writing-out place with the older generation, many of whom were still in the Gallery when I entered it. Men were allowed their cab fares. "Don't stop me now, I'm in a cab to the office!" was the pleasant *bon mot* of an old Gallery hand, hurrying for dear life to his office after having called at the Red Lion for a refresher. The smoking-room of an Inn at Storey's Gate was another favourite writing-out

room. When I entered the Gallery, in 1871 Session, the old Star Chamber was our smoking-room, and Committee room No. 18 had already been given over to press-men, so the practice of going to and from the offices to write out had been abandoned by all the papers except *The Times*, which clung to it until 1885. The commissariat department had also been improved; but it was in 1885 when the present arrangements were virtually decided after a specially appointed Committee of the House had met and conferred with the Gallery committee. Pressmen now have writing, reading, smoking, chess-rooms and library. The commissariat department is under the control of the Gallery's own Kitchen Committee. On nights when there is little to do there is no such club in London for a pressman as St. Stephen's Palace, Westminster.

The writing-out room in the House of Lords is ample on all ordinary occasions; but on first nights and during full-dress debates the "Moses Room" is converted into a writing-room. The "Moses Room" is so-called from the magnificent fresco on the wall of Moses descending from the Mount, carrying the two Tables of the Commandments.

When the Sovereign opens Parliament in person, Gallery reporters wear evening dress. No other regulation with regard to dress is now enforced, though a black morning coat in both Galleries was formerly *de rigueur*.

The Gallery is still largely ruled by custom. An old custom is to settle all accounts and dine together

at the end of each Session. Before the advent of News Agencies (1868), individual members of the Gallery supplied provincial newspapers with reports. The old Electric Press Association (afterwards taken over by the State) used to supply a brief summary of Parliamentary proceedings to provincial dailies, but if anything worthy of the name of a report was wanted there was no way of getting it except through the members of the Gallery, at that time a very close and conservative corporation. If an hon. member wished his speech reported for his county paper, he would send a note up to the Gallery and pay two guineas for taking his speech and thirty shillings per column for writing it out. The work done in the Gallery during a Session amounted in the aggregate to a very large sum, but the cross-accounts were so numerous that the last day of the Session was appointed for a grand settling up: nothing was carried forward. The "clean slate" was the custom of the Gallery.

Then came the Gallery dinner—banquet it really was—on the day of the prorogation. The banquet was as *recherché* and exclusive as a Ministerial white-bait dinner, the *menu* being settled by a committee of taste, and the wines well selected. It was a great shock to the old and stately school when the banquet became a mere dinner on some uncertain date. The Gallery dinner is now held on a convenient day before the prorogation, so as to enable men to leave Westminster for their holidays immediately after Mr. Speaker leaves the chair. As hon. and right hon.

members on the floor of the House shake hands with each other and with Mr. Speaker, so the members of the Gallery meet and shake hands with each other and the "Father of the Gallery" when all is over. This last hand-shake is a good custom, and men who have worked together for six or seven months, often under conditions trying to the temper, separate without personal or professional ill-feeling.

The gentleman holding a Gallery ticket for the greatest number of Sessions is the "Father of the Gallery." I have known three Fathers: Mr. John Burn, of the *Morning Advertiser*, a survival of the handsome, dashing, brilliant Irish invasion of Fleet Street when the century was young; Mr. William Coleman, who entered the Gallery in the palmy days of *The Sun*, and retired after fifty years of service; and the present Father, Mr. W. H. Paul, who is a Gallery reporter by descent—his father, Mr. William Paul, having been one of the reporters of the *Mirror of Parliament*.

Gallery experience, if only for one or two Sessions, is of incalculable value to a young man destined to return to the provinces and control the destinies of a daily newspaper. I have known the sons of proprietors sent into the Gallery to complete their education by rubbing off certain angles which keen competition at close quarters usually sets up in individuals, and there is no better place than the Gallery for teaching a young man his own imperfections and reliance upon others for assistance at critical moments. The young

man who does not leave the Gallery with larger views of life, and extended knowledge and appreciation of mutual relations in professional work, will probably find out in time that he has missed his true vocation.

The only intellectual standard of fitness that I am at liberty to suggest for a member of the Gallery is, that he be not inferior to the average speaker on the floor of the House. Greek is "taboo" in both Chambers. Latin is rarely heard, though classical and scientific allusions and illustrations are common. I never knew an instance of an unfamiliar reference or quotation being outside the knowledge of some one in the Gallery. Some one always knew where to find it. Very peculiar errors have at times found their way into reports, and sometimes it is not easy to say whether the reporter or the compositor is to blame. A noble lord's appeal to the authority of Jeremy Taylor appeared as "journeyman tailor," and John Bright's "bolt from the blue," as "bolt from the flue"; both of these may have been cases of mishearing. Mr. Cooper in his "Editor's Retrospect," saddles on the compositor the mistake in the *Morning Star*, with which he was credited. Lord Palmerston said: "We have all heard of the battles of the Big Endians and Little Endians." The *Star* came out with: "We have all heard of the battles of the Big Indians and Little Indians." Mr. Cooper has had the opportunity of putting himself right with posterity, and most journalists will sympathise with his language:—

"It was cruel, but even then I had learned to culti-

vate patience in dealing with printers. Bad language has no effect upon them. To tear your own hair over their blunders is only to make yourself prematurely bald without curing them. I kept on my hair when I saw the report and said nothing; my feelings were too deep for utterance."

When an accident of this kind does occur in the composing-room, chance seems to be no longer blind, but animated by a spirit of mischief, intelligently directing it towards the very word in the very passage best fitted for turning seriousness into jest, and to make the speaker look ridiculous. Members of Parliament are used to this sort of thing from the first moment they stand upon the hustings. A candidate in the West of England opened his campaign by likening himself to Cæsar, inasmuch as he had burnt his *boats* and destroyed his *bridges*, but his supporters were greatly scandalised the next morning on reading "I have burned my *boots* and destroyed my *breeches*." As a rule public speakers pay little attention to verbal errors.

"Dod's Parliamentary Companion" contains all the technical information which a young reporter needs on entering the Gallery. "Vacher's" parliamentary list of both Houses is usually in every man's pocket.

Reporting parliamentary proceedings was formerly a breach of privilege of the House. The following minute appears in the Journal of the House of Commons, dated February, 1729, after Robert Raikes (father of the founder of Sunday Schools) had for the second time been summoned to the bar for print-

ing in the *Gloucester Journal* intelligence relating to the proceedings of the House:—

> *Resolved, nemine contradicente.*—That it is an indignity to and a breach of the privilege of this House for any persons to presume to give, in written or printed newspapers, any account or minutes of the debates or other proceedings of this House, or of any Committee thereof.
>
> *Resolved, nemine contradicente.*—That upon the discovery of the authors, printers, or publishers of any such written or printed newspapers, this House will proceed against the offenders with the utmost severity.

"In 1771 several printers," says the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, "including those of the *Morning Chronicle* and the London *Evening Post*, were ordered into custody for publishing debates in the House of Commons. A long and bitter struggle between the House and the public ensued. John Wilkes took part in it. The Lord Mayor of London and an alderman were sent to the Tower for refusing to recognise the Speaker's warrant for the arrest of certain printers of parliamentary reports. But the House of Commons was beaten. In 1772 the newspapers published the reports as usual, and their right to do so has never since been really questioned."

About 1800 the manager of the *Morning Chronicle* formed the first corps of Gallery reporters who obtained access regularly to the Strangers' Gallery with the connivance of the House and the good-will of the door-keeper. This was in the old Palace of Westminster, destroyed by fire in 1835. In the new palace, completed in 1867, provision was made in both Chambers for the Press, but any hon. or rt. hon. mem-

ber in the Commons or peer in the Lords, could clear the Gallery by drawing the attention of Mr. Speaker or of the Lord Chancellor to the presence of "strangers." I only remember that power being exercised once since 1871.

In 1880 the presence of the Press was recognised practically as a right, when a select committee was appointed to consider and report on the best means of adding to the accommodation and convenience of the members of the Gallery in both Houses of Parliament. This and subsequent committees consulted with the Gallery Committee. The Hansard representative sits at the Clerk's table in the House of Lords. The advice of the Gallery Committee is now sought on great public occasions. The Gallery Committee, in 1902, respectfully tendered its advice to the First Lord of the Treasury, with reference to the proposed new rules, and their advice was not only considered, but, in part, acted on. These few facts throw some light on the evolution of the Gallery Reporter.

CHAPTER V.

THE EVOLUTION OF THE PRESS.

THE young man who is incurious about the history and traditions of his profession is wanting in one of the essential conditions to success. To know that one's profession is rooted in honour; to know that for three hundred years the newspaper press has been battling for right, for liberty, for intellectual enfranchisements, for education, for everything which elevates the standards of life, is an inspiration and a safeguard. Not to know that one is the inheritor of great traditions is to confess one's self unworthy of high descent, and in the case of a journalist, is to betray that lack of sympathy with the ideal, without which no man can rise above a mean level in the newspaper world. The evolution of the newspaper in England is one of the most interesting of studies, and the man who knows it has at his fingers' ends a knowledge of all the history, all the biography, all the serio-economic struggles, and all the science of three centuries.

The newspaper came to us, I think, in direct descent from the ballad. Before men could write, they could sing, and in the absence of chronicles, the modern historian has to rely upon ancient hymns and songs for

past events and some knowledge of national heroes. In England the ballad was the political educator of the people until the standard of national education enabled them to read for themselves.

The immediate precursor of the newspaper was the news-letter, written in London and sent to subscribers in the provinces. Sometimes a great man hired a poor scholar in London as his "own special correspondent," to keep him informed about Court news, scandals, and cockfights. Oftener the gentry clubbed together and paid the expenses of an occasional letter, which was passed from hand to hand until it fell to pieces. It is doubted whether any specimens of original MS. letters have been preserved.

No one knows when the writing of news-letters as a business began, but it is said to have died out in 1712. The popular ballad survived the news-letter.

The printed newspaper was, in fact, only the MS. news-letter in type. One Nathaniel Butter, a professional news-letter writer, having more clients than he could cater for, printed his news-letter in the year 1622, and a genuine specimen of this, the germ of the English newspaper and prototype of the society journal of to-day, is preserved in the British Museum. This specimen is entitled the *Weekly Newes*, is printed on one side of a small sheet of stout, coarse paper, and is in general appearance very like the old theatrical play-bills at the beginning of the last century. Had Nathaniel Butter "flimsied" his news-letters, the advent of the printed sheet would probably have been delayed.

These gossip-sheets became popular and multiplied. In 1663, Robert L'Estrange started the *Intelligencer*, as a political organ, with royal permission. He was an up-to-date editor, was knighted by James II., and was the first journalist to sit in Parliament. Political journalism in this country was nursed in revolution. When the Tories went out of power, the Whigs clapped Sir Robert in the Tower, and let him die there.

The political evolution of the news-sheet was rapid. Freedom of thought in type once tasted, was sweet, and suited the genius of a free people; but the freedom of the Press was baptised in blood, De Foe losing his ears in the pillory for writing too freely on public affairs.

The evolution of the newspaper is clearly marked—first social, then political, then commercial.* Within the first century, the newspaper was found to be of the greatest value to men in business. The provincial press was made up of echoes from the metropolis, local tit-bits and markets. *The St. Ives Post Boy, or the Loyal Packet*, started in 1718, was announced as "A Collection of the most Material Occurrences, Foreign and Domestick," and the *Gloucester Journal*, started in 1722, was said to "Contain not only the most authentick Foreign and Domestick news, but also the Price of Corn, Goods, etc., at Bear Key, in London, and all the Trading Cities and Market Towns fifty miles herewith" (Gloucester).

---

* The first advertisement is said to have appeared in No. 13 of the *Perfect Occurrences of Every Daie Journall*, April, 1647.

Wherever a printing press was set up a newspaper was published, and one of the successful provincial papers was the Worcester *Postman* (now *Berrow's Worcester Journal*), started, it is said, in 1690. It is worth noting that the printing of popular ballads kept the presses employed. The ballad being easily memorised, remained first favourite with the masses. The number of printing presses out of London was small, and Lord Macaulay, in his "History of England," states that in 1724 there were thirty-four counties in which there was no printer, one being Lancashire.

The first daily newspaper published in London was the *Post Boy*, but as it only survived four days, the *Daily Courant*, started in 1703, is usually cited as the first London daily. Down to the Accession of Queen Anne, newspapers were under the thumb of the "Licenser;" but in 1712 they became subject to a Stamp duty, which threatened their extinction. A red stamp was impressed on one corner of each sheet, and the duty fluctuated from one halfpenny to fourpence, which was reached in 1815. There was also an extravagant duty on all advertisements, and these "taxes on knowledge" continued down to 1853. The vitality of the newspaper press is shown in this—that when handicapped and distressed and oppressed most, it developed sufficient strength to break down class privileges, secure prison reforms, and advance the education of the masses.

The end of the eighteenth century witnessed the evolution of the leading article. Editorial comments,

as such, were not permitted before 1784, and then they were usually hidden in news paragraphs or added to a narrative of something by way of moral. Criticism had, however, long been published by way of "Letters to the Printer." The anonymous authors of these letters often surpassed the editorial "we" of later days in trenchant, fearless criticism of persons and things; but the germ of the leading article, as now understood, is discernible in the *Morning Chronicle* of the 12th May, 1791. The "leader" soon became general, and marks an important point in the evolution of the Press. "Letters to the Printer" became the light artillery of party warfare, leaders representing the great guns of high calibre.

When the newspaper reporter came into existence I cannot discover. As a matter of fact, the shorthand reporter was ready before the newspapers wanted him. The *Saints' Treasury*, of 1654, is conclusive on the point in the following words: "These sermons have been very happily taken down by the pen of a ready writer, Mr. Farthing, now a teacher of short writing; one who hath given ample testimonie of his great skill and dexteritie in writing shorthand. We think we may say there are not many words delivered by the Author that are left out."* As newspapers were enlarged and conducted on commercial principles, the shorthand reporter became more and more in evidence. At first there was but little room for him, but gradually the news-sheet by his aid became the unimpeachable

* "Notes and Queries." No. 213, ninth series.

chronicle of daily life. With the advent of the stenographist the evolution of the Press quickened. The reporter reproduced the spoken word whether in a Court of Law, the pulpit, the platform or the Senate, and the newspaper acquired in the public mind a value for veracity which never before attached to any literature or document unconsecrated by tradition. The commercial value of newspapers, which down to the passing of the Reform Bill of 1831 had been small, rose with the popular and well-founded belief in the utility and value of newspapers as documents of truth. So great was the reliance of the people upon printed reports that they were prepared to form opinions, and pronounce judgment upon the gravest issues of life and death, after reading them; and it is true to say that the newspaper reporter won for the Press a reputation for uncorrupt testimony new in the history of the world. So great became the public reliance upon the reporter's good faith, that they allowed themselves to be practically excluded from public places, provided only that the representatives of the Press were admitted. The good faith of the shorthand reporter was never impeached by the people. Whatever exception was taken to the policy of a journal in its leading articles, *the reports were trusted.* This public confidence in the good faith of the shorthand reporter became the backbone of British Journalism, and when in 1853 the newspaper taxes were finally abolished, the popular demands largely determined the lines of evolution. With the repeal of the Stamp duties, the phrase "venal press" became

obsolete. As far as I can trace, John Bright was the last who uttered it in Parliament. In a declamatory passage on the conduct of the Crimean War, uttered on December 22nd, 1854, occurs these words: "And even if I were alone, if mine were a solitary voice, raised amid the din of arms, and the clamours of a venal press, etc." The journalist has now a right to be proud of the reputation of his profession.

The modern newspaper may be said to date from 1853. Improvements in printing machinery and increased railway facilities made large circulations possible.

The abolition of the advertisement duty—one shilling and sixpence per advertisement in England, and one shilling in Ireland—developed the science of advertising.

The abolition of the penny stamp duty and cheaper methods of manufacturing paper enabled the newspapers, daily and weekly, to reduce their prices.

Journalists began to take larger views of the relations of the newspaper to modern life. The journalist was present at the seat of war; he became an explorer and discoverer. When Livingstone was lost, Stanley was sent to find him. When new markets were wanted, the reporter was despatched to discover them. So with invention, "Our Own Special" is now first in the field. So with adventure, one fine morning John Foster Fraser, a young Gallery reporter, jumped on his bicycle and wheeled round the world, sending back to the newspapers whatever was of interest in his two years' travel.

Telegraphs and cables throughout the world set their mark upon the character and accelerated the evolution of the newspaper. Compared with the papers of to-day, those of fifty years ago were parochial. The newspaper sphere of influence is earth-bound simply because the secret of communication with the heavenly planets has not yet been discovered.

The last thirty years witnessed two remarkable developments in practical journalism, namely, the halfpenny evening and the halfpenny morning paper. The new evenings, with catchy headlines and results dished up in hot haste for "the man in the street," stimulated the public impatience at delay, and the halfpenny cadets of the family avoided the air of literary distinction which characterised the *Globe* and the pennies. Then came the halfpenny morning, masticating and digesting everything for the reader, almost snuffing out the shorthand reporter in the process. All the news of the world is condensed for the halfpenny morning into lines and paragraphs by expert sub-editors, and everything is so well peptonised by their skilful treatment that the man in a hurry can swallow and digest the whole in railway carriage or 'bus. Signed articles by specialists is another feature of the halfpenny morning. In 1873 a farthing daily newspaper was published in the Strand, under the style of the *Country Daily Newspaper*. It was designed by Mr. Alexander Mackie, of Warrington, but only a few numbers were published, and its short life had no perceptible influence on the evolution of metropolitan journalism.

The provincial press remains the nursery of jour-

nalists. The early news sheets were copies of their London prototypes, but in the eighteenth century, having the London dailies to rely on for political and foreign news, they developed on independent lines, and in the beginning of the next century the best amongst them were edited with much care and possessed reporting staffs of acknowledged superiority. Verbatim reporting was the strong point of the country weekly, and London editors found the provinces the best recruiting ground for first-class stenographers. Metropolitan weeklies (excluding the literary and critical reviews), overshadowed by the great dailies, became more and more parochial organs, and suffered by comparison with country journals representing great county interests.

The provincial daily is the offspring of the weekly, and dates from the repeal of the Stamp Duties. In 1855 there were thirteen dailies in the country. The practice was to print a daily in the office of a weekly, which, having the advertisements, was a sort of nursing mother to the new experiment. When the daily was established, then the weekly developed new features and became a home magazine, an educational journal, a literary review as well as a digest of political and general news. Some provincial offices publish a morning, an evening, and a weekly, and are ahead of London in this respect. No London morning has an evening edition except the *Standard*. *The Times* publishes a weekly, but no evening edition; and no newspaper has a morning, evening and weekly edition.

The modern development of provincial newspaper enterprise is mainly due to the system of private wires rented from the Post Office—the *Scotsman* was the first paper to rent a wire, in 1865—and to the great News Agencies, collecting and then distributing home and foreign news at tariff rates.

The evolution of the newspaper has been most perfect where representative government has been most untrammeled. With us it has become the eyes and ears, the voice and judgment of the people. It absorbed the news-letter and displaced the ballad, it became the daily chronicler of the times and the birthplace of creative thought. Resting upon capital, the newspaper initiates, shapes, and then governs without displacing the social, religious, and political institutions of the country. Amongst the great English-speaking race the newspaper, though in its highest form of development, possesses unexhausted stores of energy; and the only demand which it makes upon the newspaper man is that he shall have an educated knowledge of all its parts and the good sense to guide it.

The evolution of the newspaper press is not yet complete. What seems possible is that the great dailies should cease to be morning papers only, but should issue continuous editions from year's end to year's end without change of title, each edition being a new paper—all reports published *in extenso*, and nothing reserved for fuller publication on the morrow. At present all the "leading matter" in an evening paper is the same throughout the day, and the reader who buys each edition pays for the same literary

matter seven or eight times over, and it frequently happens that the leader of the morning is stale at noon and antiquated (sometimes misleading) at night. The evening paper also gives scrappy information about important events, and we have to wait until the following morning for full telegrams and reports. With the continuous flow of news from all quarters of the world and the improved means of transmission by wire and telephone at cheaper rates, a great newspaper might come out with an entirely new face three or four times every day. If this were done in London, the provinces would follow.

The evolution of the newspaper from the gossip sheets of Nathaniel Butter until now, though marvellous, will never be complete as long as the human intellect can find new inventions, and human progress is real.

"English Journalism and the Men who have made it," by Charles Pebody, formerly editor of the *Yorkshire Post*, is a popular and cheap story of the evolution of the newspaper press. "The Newspaper Press: Its Origin, Progress and Present Position," three vols., by James Grant, formerly editor of the *Morning Advertiser*, is the standard work on the subject, but it only comes down to 1872. "An Editor's Retrospect: Fifty Years of Newspaper Work," by Charles A. Cooper, editor of the *Scotsman*, 1896, is interesting and instructive. See "Bibliography of the British Periodical Press," Mitchell's "Newspaper Press Directory" for 1902.

CHAPTER VI.

JOURNALISM AS A PROFESSION.

AFTER a young man has learnt his business in the case-room and publishing-office, in the reporters' and editors' rooms, after having passed through weekly and daily newspaper offices in the provinces, and become familiar with Fleet Street, what then?

The young man who has mastered his business is a professional journalist in the only sense in which the word "professional" is understood by working journalists. In the absence of a diploma from any teaching body a man secures his professional status through his experience. The experienced man is the professional man; and the great difference between professional men is the facility with which they can turn their experience to account at the right moment. *A man may learn all that can be taught, and yet not be worth his salt on a newspaper.* If covered with diplomas, such as he would never rise above the duties of respectable office drudgery.

Two classes of men form the great body of journalists; namely, those who have been educated in office routine, and those who have drifted into the work through some special circumstances or qualification.

It is estimated that there are about 10,000 gentlemen engaged now in journalism, and these are separable into two classes: Working Journalists, and Specialists. Working journalists are managers, night editors, sub-editors and reporters. Specialists are leader writers, critics, descriptive writers, reviewers, etc., and when a specialist becomes a journalist by profession and aims to be entrusted with the destinies of a journal, he teaches himself downwards, until he reaches the case-room—the point at which the young working journalist ought to commence. A brilliant literary man without practical training is well qualified to land his concern in bankruptcy, and I wish to make it clear that the highly paid specialist, called by courtesy a "journalist," is only an ancillary under direction and control.

When speaking of journalism as a profession, I include those who have, in whatever manner, obtained a practical knowledge of newspapers as a business as well as of literature as a profession. The Institute of Journalists obtained its charter in 1890, and by virtue of this charter, members of the Institute are "professional" men. Whilst making a wider application of the term, I would advise every young man to become a member of the Institute.

The young journalist who has passed through the course outlined in this book ought to be qualified to accept any post offered to him, and, what is more, acquit himself well in it. The salaries of managers and night editors vary from £600 to £2,000 per annum; and an average Fleet Street man, with good health and industry, should make from £350 to £400

a year. A sessional man should earn £300 to £400 during each Session, and if he has a *clientèle* for syndicated parliamentary letters and sketches, his income runs easily into four figures. A leading article writer in good repute should make an income of from £1,000 to £1,500 a year. Amazing industry and perpetual freshness of mind are, however, required of the literary journalist, and he should be able to write three articles a day for five days in each week. The literary journalist who works at full pressure generally breaks down early; and the late Dr. Goodfellow's advice to a young literary man, *not to do quite as much as he could*, I believe to be sound.

The incomes of working journalists in the provinces have greatly improved during the last twenty-five years. A young man of talent and industry, with London experience, is well paid on returning to the provinces, and is sometimes even bribed with a substantial share in a newspaper property to leave Fleet Street.

The average net income of a journalist by profession is certainly equal to that of the working members of other professions, though it is true that the grand exceptional prizes which fall to the journalist are not equal to those which fall elsewhere. A throat specialist may earn £30,000 a year, and an eminent common law lawyer a similar amount; a gentleman in holy orders may become a bishop; but though these prizes are greater than anything which pure and simple journalism can offer, they pale before the every-day incomes of commercial men. If your aim is to make

money, and die "rich beyond the dreams of avarice," don't become a journalist. If you have the money-brain, try commerce; or, if you are irrevocably bound to a newspaper, confine yourself to its commercial side —only don't forget that, as the representative of the hard-face type, you will be all the better for knowing reporters' and editors' duties.

Fair as the prospects of working journalists now are, there is an upward tendency towards permanent improvement, because the young generation is availing itself of the higher education, and so qualifying itself to do much of the work now given to specialists at advanced rates. Working journalists of the old school have been overshadowed by literary specialists in the matter of education. A young university man waiting for briefs, has been for years in training before he writes the article on (say) our political and municipal institutions, which secures him an engagement as an occasional, and then permanent, leader writer. He stands upon a vantage ground and can do literary work which the ordinary newspaper man, brought up on shorthand note-books and newspapers, cannot look at. He is, properly speaking, a publicist, and not a journalist, though often given work to do which comes well within the province of every well-trained young journalist. The late Sir Arthur Arnold I reckon amongst publicists, although he was the first editor of the *Echo*.

The new generation is, however, working on the higher lines and qualifying for work now given out to specialists; and in this sure and sound way the status

and income of the working professional journalist are gradually improving.

Without becoming a "close profession," like law or medicine—which I, for one, should regret to see—the position of the journalist would be much improved if the science and practice of the profession were taught by teaching bodies at Universities and Colleges. At Heidelberg, in Germany, Dr. Bach, Professor of History, teaches journalism as a science. In Paris there is a School of Journalism connected with the École des Hautes Études Sociales. The school was started two years ago, and the teaching professors include MM. J. Cornély, of the *Figaro*, Henry Fouquier, and Eugene Lautier, of the *Temps*. The course for the last term included:—

Reporting, theoretical and practical.

Journalism as a profession.

Journalists as literary men.

History of the Foreign Press, with practical illustrations of press work in England, Germany, Spain and Italy.

Press laws and their possible reform.

Law reporting.

Dramatic criticism.

In France such a school is, perhaps, only possible in Paris; but in the United Kingdom there is a sufficient body of journalists in the great provincial towns to teach the art and practice of newspaper journalism in colleges, such as the Owens College, at Manchester, and all the Universities. There is at present the prospect of a teaching body being formed in the City of

London in connection with the Steevens' Scholarships; * and there is also the possibility of the Institute of Journalists founding a school for turning out practical young journalists, well grounded in printing and publishing, as well as in the higher education.

The future advancement of journalism as a profession must, I am convinced, depend upon education; for the educated journalist who has received a practical training should be qualified to do the best-paid work and follow the lines of the future evolution of the newspaper press, instead of standing on one side in favour of the specialist. I do not suggest that the specialist will not be needed in the future; all that I suggest is that he will not be as much in evidence as now if the working journalist—who is the only true professional journalist—pays proper attention to his own education.

Journalism, which is even now a desirable profession to enter, may become more desirable still for the young man with the journalist's brain. I have been a working journalist for thirty-five years, and have been content with it; and, looking backwards and forwards, it is my firm conviction that if I were young again and had my choice, I would become a journalist by profession.

---

* It was announced whilst this book was in the press that classes for training boys in journalism were to be opened immediately at the City of London School.

THE END.

PRINTED BY H. VIRTUE AND COMPANY, LIMITED, CITY ROAD, LONDON.